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Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Jay Nordlinger

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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■ LETTERS ■

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

I appreciate Naomi Schaefer's largely favorable review of my book *Common Prayers* ("Neither Nor," Oct. 15). However, I never predicted or advocated the "death of God" theology. In *The Secular City* I devoted the entire last chapter to an *attack* on that movement, and I have frequently debated its advocates.

Miss Schaefer shows a keen appreciation of the tension I sometimes experience between my own Christian faith and the Jewish practices I participate in, but the point of my book is that my effort to understand Judaism has made me a more thoughtful and committed Christian. Therefore her closing comment, that she wonders why I "don't just convert," misreads my whole thesis. More and more Jewish and Christian married couples are finding, as we did, that such marriages can be a spiritual pilgrimage for both.

Prof. Harvey Cox
Cambridge, Mass.

BLUE GENE?

In his review of Andrew Solomon's *The Noonday Demon* ("Hence, Loathèd Melancholy," Oct. 1), John D. Gartner wondered why natural selection has not eliminated the genetic cause of depression.

I used to wonder the same thing about the hypothetical genetic cause of (or predisposition toward) homosexuality, until someone pointed out that natural selection eliminates *dominant* genetic characteristics adverse to successful reproduction, but not recessive ones.

I would go so far as to predict that if there are any genetic causes of (or predispositions toward) depression or homosexuality, they would necessarily have to be recessive.

Norman Hines
Ridgecrest, Calif.

AUX ARMES, CITOYENS!

In the Oct. 15 issue, Roger Kimball ("Demons Under Western Eyes") quotes Osama bin Laden as saying, "We do not differentiate between those dressed in military uniforms and civilians; they are all targets in this fatwa." Mark Steyn ("Fight Now, Love Later") observes, "A terrorist is an opportunistic warrior. If he can kill the president, he will. But if he can't, he'll kill you."

The implication of these statements is that in this terrorist war, we the people are on the front lines. If so, we need to be armed. All the antigun laws, which are in violation of the Second Amendment anyway, must be repealed. For our own government to keep us disarmed in the face of terrorism is outrageous.

Joseph P. Martino
Sidney, Ohio

SIGN HIM UP!

About Ramesh Ponnuru's penetrating article ("What We're Not Fighting For," Nov. 5): Although I agree that we are not fighting for that blonde bimbo in the pix, if it were Faith Hill, then ancient though I am, I would volunteer for active duty.

Reid Buckley
Camden, S.C.

KUDOS

What a joy it is to read John Derbyshire's articles in each issue. He gives new information, along with an insight I find in no other writer. Mr. Derbyshire is a rare bird, a man of courage who writes the truth.

Robert Previdi
Manhasset, N.Y.

Allow me to express my awe at the piece by Victor Davis Hanson ("What Are We Made Of?") in the Oct. 1 issue. I am quite literally stunned by its truth and clarity. If there is a civilian medal to be given in the present war, please do your best to make sure that he gets one.

William J. Weiss
Philadelphia, Pa.

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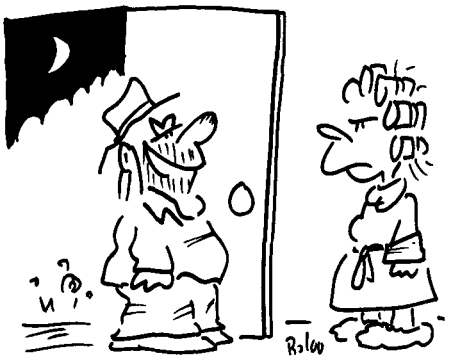
■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ **Bush** at Travis Air Force Base in California: "You mark my words: People are going to get tired of the war on terrorism. And by the way, it may take more than two years. There's a variety of theaters. So long as anybody's terrorizing established governments, there needs to be a war." . . . Vice President **Cheney**, in *Washington Post*: "It is different than the Gulf War was, in the sense that it may never end. At least, not in our lifetime." . . . Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman **Richard B. Myers**: "This is a different kind of conflict. The closest analogy would be the drug war." . . . Bush on the World Series, according to *New York Post*: "I'm for anyone but the Yankees."

■ Former CIA chief **James Woolsey**: "There are too many things, too many examples of stolen identities, of cleverly crafted documentation, of coordination across continents and between states . . . to stray very far from the conclusion that a state, and a very well-run intelligence service, is involved here." . . . In Reuters/Zogby poll, 74 percent support expanding war on terrorism to "go after **Saddam Hussein**." . . . National security adviser **Condoleezza Rice**, in *New York Times*: "I think that the Russians are beginning to see that what we've said all along is true: that the near-term program for missile defense, which is really a testing and evaluation program, is not actually a threat to them." . . . In New Atlantic Initiative/*Chicago Sun-Times* poll, 77 percent say they support building missile-defense system. . . . Rep. **Steve Buyer** (R., Ind.) proposes using tactical nuclear weapons on parts of Afghanistan where **bin Laden** may be hiding: "Close these caves for a thousand years." . . . Adds Rep. **Peter King** (R., N.Y.): "I would never rule out tactical weapons if I thought they could do the job and if they were needed."

■ At Dulles International Airport in Virginia, 87 percent of baggage screeners are non–U.S. citizens, reports NPR. . . . In CNN/*USA Today* poll, 58 percent say immigration levels should be reduced and 30 percent say keep them at present levels; in June, respective numbers were 41 percent and 42 percent. . . . In Council on American-Islamic Relations poll, 67 percent of U.S. mosque leaders say "America is an immoral, corrupt society." . . . University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center says there are no more than 2.8 million Muslims in U.S., despite advocacy-group claims of 7 million. . . . Rep. **Cynthia McKinney** (D., Ga.) writes to Saudi Arabian prince **Alwaleed bin Talal** expressing disappointment that New York mayor **Rudy Giuliani** returned his $10 million check because of objections to political statements, asks prince to donate money to black Americans. . . . Rep. **Charles Rangel** (D., N.Y.) on McKinney's letter, in New York *Daily News*: "It is very embarrassing."



"Where have I been?—Well, we'll probably never know all *the facts . . ."*

■ New York City Board of Education votes to require Pledge of Allegiance at start of school day. . . . Gallup poll: 41 percent of New Yorkers consider their city "safe," compared to 33 percent one year ago. . . . In Florida, high school drops plans for anti–bin Laden poster. Explains Pinellas County school spokesman **Ron Stone**, in *St. Petersburg Times*: "I thought perhaps, especially with our emphasis on multicultural issues . . . that it would not be a good thing to do." . . . Bradley Foundation gives largest gift ever: $20 million to Partners in Advancing Values in Education for school choice and charter-school construction. . . . Stanford offers course on "The Language of Hip-Hop Culture," in which students study lyrics of **Sean "P. Diddy" Combs** and other rappers.

■ Sen. **Hillary Clinton** (D., N.Y.) on running for president, on French television: "That is not something that is at all part of my future. I have so many things that I'm interested in doing in my life right now, that that is something I've said I'm not going to do." . . . Percentage of new mothers in workforce falls for first time since Census Bureau started keeping those statistics. . . . Price of gas per gallon falls from $1.525 in September to $1.284 in October, with lowest price in country $0.959 in Virginia's Prince William County, according to AAA. . . . U.S. Olympic Committee says it will back one of four sites for 2012 games: Washington-Baltimore, Houston, New York, or San Francisco.

■ Britain and Australia commit ground troops to Afghanistan war, Canada sends support personnel, and France considers greater involvement. . . . British admiral Sir **Michael Boyce**, in *Daily Telegraph*: "The war against Communism took 50 years to win, and I wonder if we shouldn't be thinking of it like that." . . . Egyptian president **Hosni Mubarak**, in *Newsweek*: "Osama bin Laden made his explosions and then started talking about the Palestinians. He never talked about them before." . . . Chinese purchased unexploded U.S. missiles from bin Laden following cruise-missile attack in 1998, says witness in Italian custody, but China denies claim. . . . Russia says it will dismantle "listening station" in Cuba. . . . **Winnie Mandela**, former wife of **Nelson Mandela**, arrested for bank fraud in South Africa.

■ **Bob Dole**'s advice for **Al Gore**, in *Washington Post*: "I'd tell him to shave his beard. I mean, he's an attractive guy, you know, and I don't know, I mean I guess he enjoys it or he wouldn't have it. Men go through these stages. I can't see Al Gore when I look at him now. I mean, all this brush! You see his eyes, you know, and that must be his forehead, there aren't any whiskers up there." **NR**

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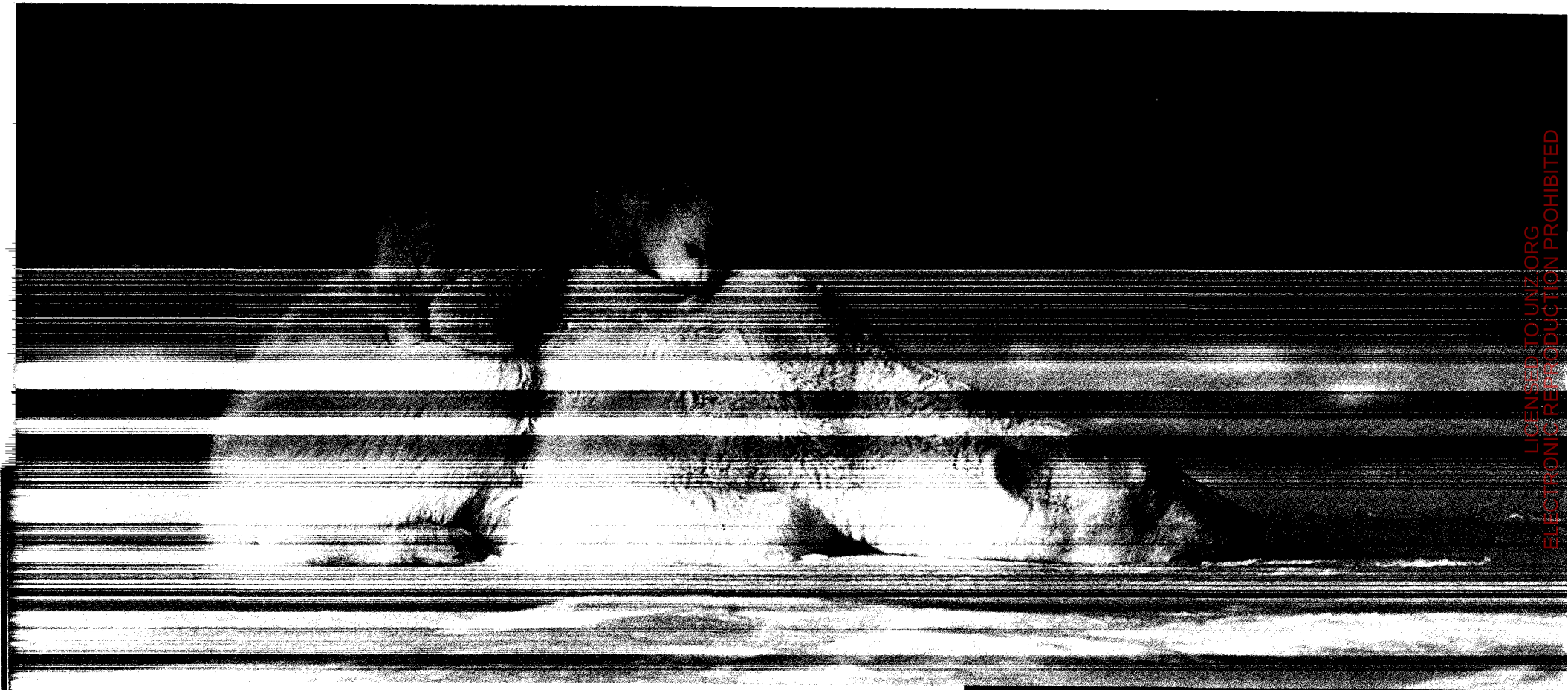

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THE WEEK

■ At a big Madison Square Garden event, Hillary was booed, Bill was cheered. Win some, lose some.

■ Will the Arab street hate us for fighting in Afghanistan during Ramadan? Sure—but they will hate us for not fighting too. The cry about the sanctity of Ramadan is the dishonest mouth-warfare of the inflamed. Muhammed fought during Ramadan in 624. In 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel during Ramadan, which also coincided with Yom Kippur—a twofer. In 1982, Iran launched "Operation Ramadan," an attack on Iraq. If one is willing to take lives in battle, then the cause must be of sufficient gravity to excuse relatively trivial profanations; or one has no good cause, in which case fighting on holidays only underlines the transgression. If the enemy turns mosques into arsenals, then they become legitimate targets, for the same reason. In World War II, the Allies fought a pitched battle for the Abbey of Monte Cassino, which was reduced to rubble. The Nazis lost then, even as their heirs will lose now, whatever the calendar says.

■ Here is the face of the enemy. Six armed and bearded men stormed St. Dominic's Roman Catholic church in Bahawalpur, Pakistan, while it was being used by a Protestant congregation. They killed the Muslim cop who was guarding the door. They killed the minister. They killed women and children. One of the assailants emptied his automatic rifle into a heap of the wounded, to make the work of murder more perfect. The logic of the assault was evidently that America is a majority-Christian nation, therefore Pakistani Christians, who are less than 3 percent of that population, are fair game for the pious jihadist. That's as logical as killing thousands of Americans for the crime of going to work on a Tuesday. Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with His heel.

■ Pretty much every day, terrorists gun down or blow up Israelis. The victims may be families in a pizzeria, four women out shopping, or a cabinet minister breakfasting in a hotel. So the Israelis go in hot pursuit after the killers, and by all accounts they're catching up with quite a number of them. *We* are making every effort to stop terrorists from killing more of *us*, too, and we're planning to catch as many as we can. But just as we are moving into terrorist country, here comes the State Department to pressure the Israelis to move *out* of terrorist country. The argument seems to be that the Israelis are giving offense to Muslims, and mustn't. We are no doubt giving offense too. What else are you expected to give in the process of defending yourself against murder? There will be times when our interests and Israel's diverge, of course, but terror is one and indivisible. It's absurd that we go after terrorists but try to inhibit Israel from doing so. The State Department might consider a refresher course in logic. And one in common humanity, too.

■ Treasury secretary Paul O'Neill said that parts of the House Republicans' tax bill were "show business" since they would probably not get enacted at the end of the day. O'Neill later semi-retracted the remark, but there was truth in what he said. The House Republicans know that not every pro-growth provision in their bill will become law. They passed an ambitious bill in the expectation that by doing so they would exert a positive influence on the bill that finally gets signed. One would think the Bush administration, too, would be trying to win as good a stimulus package as possible. But that would require it to have a secretary of the Treasury whose time is not occupied by cleaning up after his own gaffes.

■ The Republican candidates for governor in Virginia and New Jersey, Mark Earley and Bret Schundler, are both trailing in the polls. Earley's campaign got off to a late start, letting Democrat Mark Warner slickly repackage himself as a moderate. Schundler has suffered from the weak support of the Republican establishment and the state's understandable inattention to the race. Both men have endured the usual biased and incompetent press coverage. But they deserve to win. Earley and Schundler have been steadfast champions of conservative policy ideas, and both would do better by their states than their opponents, particularly when it comes to taxes and education. We'll be rooting for them on November 6.

■ As New York City prepares to elect Rudy Giuliani's successor, the horror of September 11 has drained much of the air of vanity from tyro Michael Bloomberg's campaign on the Republican line. A billionaire could find easier things to do than labor to take on what will be one of the hardest jobs on earth, and Bloomberg's persistence retroactively redeems his motives. It does not, however, boost his qualifications. He remains a liberal Democrat who switched parties to run for office. Many signs, from a patchwork reconstruction plan to an opportunistic alliance with the black radical sectary Lenora Fulani, show that he is not ready for prime time. His Democratic opponent, Mark Green, is as liberal as they come, a protégé of Ramsey Clark and Ralph Nader. But he has spent 30 years in politics and government; he has shown some signs of learning (he is endorsed by Bill Bratton, Giuliani's police commissioner); and the attack may have sobered him. Conservative New Yorkers can't comfortably vote for either man, but they wish the winner, and his stricken constituency, well.

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■ The new anti-terrorism law expands federal powers to permit the detention of foreign nationals who are suspected terrorists for up to seven days. On the eighth day, however, they must go free—unless they're charged with some crime. But getting serious about terrorism will require something more: greater deportation authority, more coercive interrogation methods, and ethnic profiling. The ACLU may howl at these proposals, but the only alternatives are cracking down on *everyone* by issuing national ID cards and frisking grandmothers at airports.

■ Events in Northern Ireland continue to offer a seminar in how *not* to deal with terrorists. Following the September 11 attacks, terrorism is suddenly unpopular even among Sinn Fein supporters here in the United States, and fundraising for the lads with the Semtex and the ski masks has been seriously affected. Bending to these new realities, and perhaps also to the threatened withdrawal of a very lucrative book contract, Sinn Fein chief Gerry Adams agreed to put a certain quantity (unspecified) of his arsenal of guns and explosives (total size unknown) "beyond use," and the functionary charged with verifying this "decommissioning" confirmed that it had, in fact, been done. In response, the British government began dismantling three army watchtowers. Thus the deadly equivalence is reinforced: The lawfully empowered army and police forces of a constitutional, democratic state stand on the same ethical level as a clique of fanatics who consider that the justice of their own cause places them above all the restraints of decency, morality, law, and civilization. The Irish Republic has a properly constituted army of its own: Those calling themselves the "Irish Republican Army" are nothing but a gang of amoral hoodlums lacking any constitutional sanction, descendants of the losing side in the Irish Civil War of the 1920s, when Sinn Feiners alienated all decent Irish people by the savagery of their tactics. Instead of hunting these terrorists down relentlessly, as we are now hunting down al-Qaeda, the British government, in pursuit of peace (on the British mainland, that is) at any price, has sunk to the folly of accepting them as negotiating partners. The full scope of that folly will be revealed when the unknown, but surely huge, quantities of non-decommissioned terrorist arms are taken from their hiding places and used against those who have all along been their main intended targets: the constitutional democrats of Ireland, both north and south.

■ The Supreme Court has never ruled whether the Second Amendment protects an individual right to own guns or—the conventional liberal view—merely a "collective right" that applies only to the National Guard. But the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has just waded into the controversy with a decision that says, yes, the amendment protects an individual right in the same manner as the rest of the Bill of Rights. Constitutional protection for gun rights does not mean that no regulations of gun ownership are permissible; indeed, the court upheld the restriction at issue in the case before it. The Second Amendment does not bar even foolish regulations of gun ownership. But it does mean that a ban on civilian handgun ownership, the ultimate goal of the gun-control groups, is impermissible. By dashing their fondest hopes, and allaying gun owners' worst fears, the Fifth Circuit just may have made it possible to begin a civil and reasonable debate on guns.

■ Following the tradition of Republican presidents making fools of themselves in small matters when visiting the Orient—Gerald Ford's borrowed morning suit, Bush the First vomiting on the Japanese prime minister—George W. Bush donned a silk Mandarin jacket with frogged buttons at the summit in Shanghai. The president's jacket was a fine Tory blue; his host, Chinese number one Jiang Zemin, wore a similar item in, of course, bright red. In larger matters the Bush visit was a mixed bag. In a speech, the president spoke forthrightly, saying: "No government should use our war against terrorism as an excuse to persecute minorities." The Chinese Communists, of course, see it as precisely such an excuse, and did not permit any of Bush's speeches to be broadcast on China's state-controlled TV. Only one jailed opponent of the Communists, U.S. citizen Wu Jianmin, was released ahead of the Bush visit. As the dismal calculus of these things goes, this was a meager offering, indicating that favors from the U.S. government are trading at a new low since September 11. The way the Communists see it, we need them much more than they need us right now. Ergo, they do not even have to pretend to be listening when we press our concern for human rights in China. It is to Bush's credit that, according to his officials, he pressed it anyway.

■ Zambia is one of Africa's poorest and most debt-ridden countries, yet President Frederick Chiluba lives in grand style, indulging a taste for Rolex watches and gold jewelry. The presidency of Zambia comes with a salary of $22,000 per annum, which presumably goes a long way in the Third World. Could this be how Chiluba finances his lifestyle? Er, no: A keen-eyed bank clerk in Ndola recently noticed that the president's salary had, in fact, been illegally diverted for a full year into the account of a local businessman of similar name, *without the president noticing*. Chiluba would not, of course, be the first person to master the art of living off his expense account, but you would think he might glance at his bank statements once in a while. Too busy fighting corruption, we guess.

■ Naguib Mahfouz, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988, is a dazzling novelist, whose *Cairo Trilogy* may well be read for as long as novels are read. He has not had an easy time of it in his own country, Egypt, where he has been physically attacked by fundamentalists, and where some of his books are banned. Yes, some Mahfouz novels can be read only outside Egypt—which should tell the author something. Sadly, Mahfouz has given an interview to an Egyptian newspaper in which he says the usual outrageous things about America and the present war: Our actions in Afghanistan, he says, are "just as despicable a crime" as the terror on September 11. And then he gives the standard line about the "root causes" of terrorism, strongly implying that America has brought mass murder on itself. President Bush had it right: In

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A Different Kind of Cha acter fo

David Davenport is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Wasn't it only yesterday that we ushered in the new millennium with such loud fanfare and high hopes? But, in only a matter of months, we are already engaged in the first war of the new era, one described as a "different kind of war" against secret enemies in unknown places. Doubtless there can be no high-tech knockout punch, as in the gulf war; instead we will need to gird ourselves for sustained combat against terrorism around the world.

Thanks to authors and actors such as Tom Brokaw and Tom Hanks, we have rediscovered the key to victory in the greatest war of the last century: the remarkable character of that generation of Americans. I know it firsthand because I grew up in one of its families. Character traits such as sacrifice, loyalty, teamwork, and deferred gratification came naturally to my parents after their World War II experience.

What kind of character might it take to win this new kind of war? And does this generation have what it takes? The early signs are encouraging. Who could not have been inspired by the character of firefighters in New York or the heroism of passengers on United Flight 93? Happily this year's fall colors include the red, white, and blue of patriotism, everywhere from storefronts to pickup trucks.

But to win this war, **an initial outburst of heroism and patriotism will not be enough.** When the book is written on this generation of Americans and its major war against terrorism, it will need to record that Americans reframed their character in several important ways.

This is truly the "now" generation. Through technology, basically everything we know can be zipped around the world in a matter of moments, and billions of dollars change hands in a nanosecond. Americans will want pictures of captured terrorists and shorter lines at airports very soon.

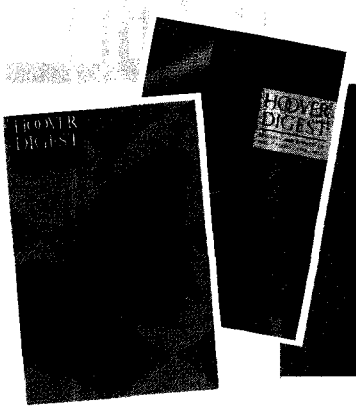
But can we reframe our thinking and recognize that a complex war such as this is not fought in minutes or hours but perhaps in months and years? If the opportunity before us is to rally the world community and eradicate the threat of terrorism, that will be a long-term economic, political, and military campaign. **Can we reframe our frustration and understand that patience is part of our contribution to winning this war?**

We are also the "me" generation, focused mainly on meeting our own needs. In the early days of this battle, there have been encouraging signs that we were breaking through to the "we" thinking that could win this war. Political leaders set aside their conflicts and stood together; ordinary Americans set aside their own personal safety and comfort to help others. We must remember that World War II was not won by soldiers alone but also by people back home who saved gasoline and built ships faster than ever before.

In short, this "different kind of war" is as likely to be decided by the content of our character as by the accuracy of our bombs. Let's be sure America is well armed!

— David Davenport

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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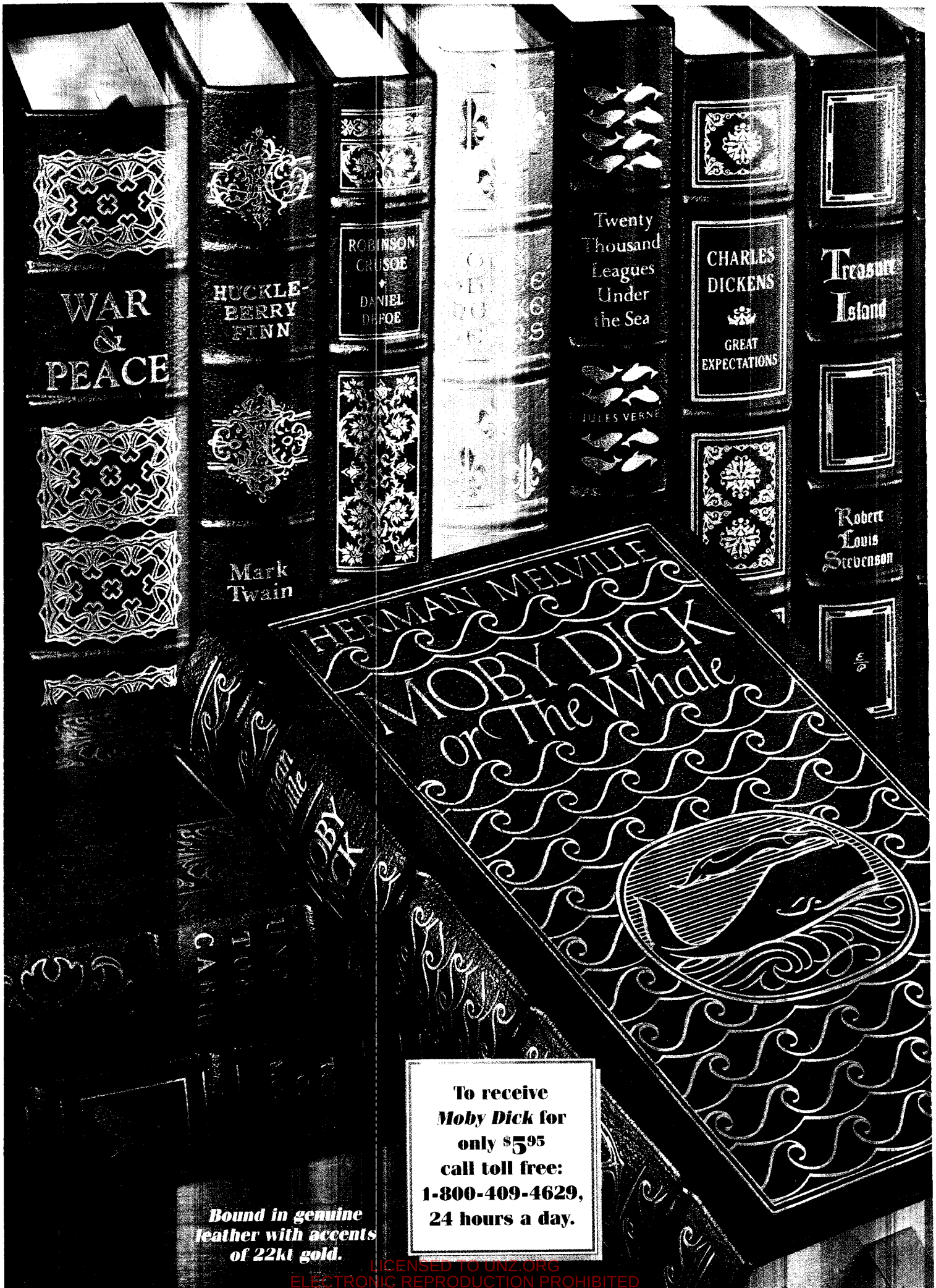

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the present hour, you are either with *us*—civilization—or with *them*—barbarism. And Naguib Mahfouz is only the latest in a long line of dazzling artists who have sided with the barbarians.

■ How many Muslims are there in the United States? Hard to say: By law, the U.S. Census may not ask questions about religion. NR's John Derbyshire, relying upon what he took to be an impeccable source (to wit, *The Economist*), recently included the figure of 6 million in an article on racial profiling ("At First Glance," October 15). This figure, it turns out, though widely advertised, is a wild guess put out by Muslim organizations for their own advantage. Now two careful, independent studies by demographers of repute have come up with answers strikingly close to each other: between 1.8 and 1.9 million—which is to say, less than a third of the much-broadcast 6 million. The American Muslim Council was naturally furious with these demographers, and charged one of them with trying to "deny the existence of 4 1/2 million American Muslims." They further accused him of "tearing at the very heart of America." They then went on to claim that their own estimate of "more than 7 million" Muslims came from the 2000 U.S. Census figures. But hold on there a minute: By law, the U.S. Census may not . . .

■ Jonathan Franzen's hot, hip new novel, *The Corrections*, has made him both a best-seller and well-reviewed dude. It has also made him a horse's ass. When *The Corrections* was picked by Oprah Winfrey as a selection for her book club, Franzen worried that his brow was sagging, and started distancing himself from unseemly fame. "She's picked some good books," he told an interviewer, "but she's picked enough schmaltzy, one-dimensional ones that I cringe, myself, even though I think she's really smart." No one can accuse Franzen of being really smart, or really gracious. How would the popes of high modernism have handled an Oprah pick, which includes a turn on her show? T. S. Eliot would have jumped at the opportunity to air his cagey persona. Ezra Pound would have harangued about the beauties of Provence and the evils of the Bank of England. James Joyce would have been a trickier subject, but properly stroked, he might have sung an Irish song or two in his rich tenor. Miss Winfrey, rightly irked by Franzen's airs, rescinded the TV appearance, though she stuck by the book pick. Franzen can stay where he belongs, addressing seminars of groupies at Bennington, Bard, and Antioch.

■ The composer George Frederick Handel (1685–1759) has been "outed" by Dr. Ellen T. Harris, Professor of Music at M.I.T. and author of several books on the composer. Dr. Harris bases her inference not on any new researches into Handel's personal life, about which next to nothing is known, but on "the clear homosexual subtext" she has discerned in his operatic works. As further evidence, our percipient musicologist notes that much of Handel's music is punctuated by long silences. "It is quite striking and very emotional," she asserts. "It denotes something that cannot be said—love that dares not speak its name, if you like." We don't.

■ John H. "Jack" Plumb was a spectacular figure among modern British historians. He spent his entire academic career as master of Christ's College, Cambridge, where he had studied under the great G. M. Trevelyan. His permanent contribution to history was in the 18th-century field, and principally the important figure of Robert Walpole, whom he saw as the architect of British political stability. Walpole's politics of stability could be crass; the opposition had the literary people. But stability led to prosperity, and thus to world power. You can say that Walpole made Edmund Burke possible. Jack Plumb completed two magnificent volumes of his Walpole biography—but never completed the whole. He had a great gift for popular writing as well, and in a very 18th-century way he loved fine living and also very expensive antique porcelain. His collection is a marvel to behold. His popular histories on various subjects are readable and valuable, and they made him rich. Perhaps one of his many students will complete his Walpole. He has died at 90 in Cambridge. *Ave atque vale.*

Joe Biden Explodes

He says we act like bullyboys;
His diatribe blew Daschle's poise,
And Gephardt jumped, for heaven's sake.
The problem is, they're on the make
But can't get any traction; so
With '04—are you running, Joe?—
Approaching, not to say '02,
The cautious stick to peek-a-boo.

—W. H. von Dreele

AT WAR

The Limits of Patience

The war in Afghanistan has abundant complications: The terrain is more difficult than the desert of the Persian Gulf war, getting Pakistan, a reluctant but tactically important ally, to cooperate in overthrowing the Taliban regime it created will require subtlety and cunning, etc. Yet for all these complications, what the U.S. war effort most needs is the clarity of simple-mindedness, the understanding that nothing much matters next to the goal of achieving a decisive victory in Afghanistan, which in turn requires annihilating our enemies. Not disrupting their command-and-control, not degrading their infrastructure, not diminishing their morale—although these may be useful antecedents—but killing them.

It is a natural temptation to flinch from the awful necessity

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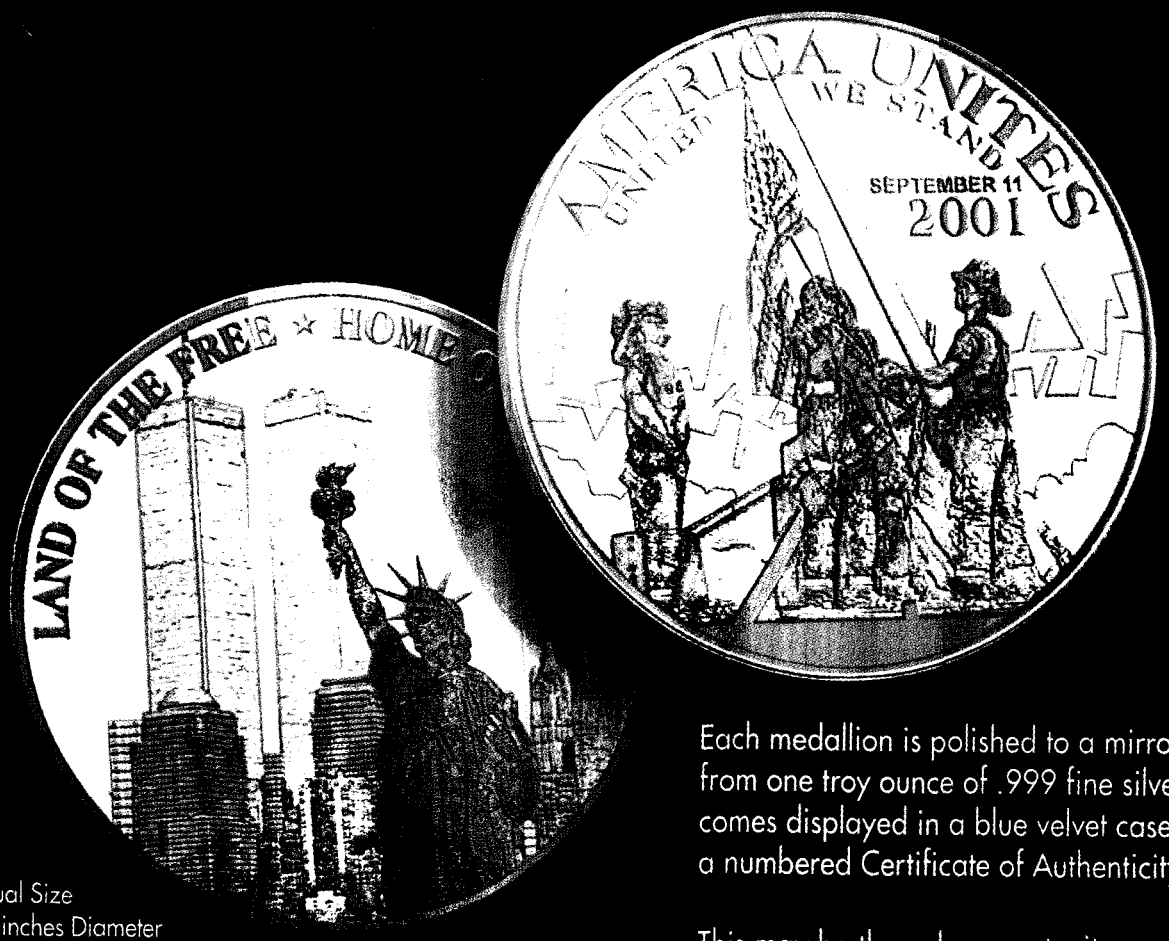

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of killing, to think that conflicts and disputes can be worked out or, failing that, settled by the application of a nicely calibrated amount of violence. But a determined and fanatical enemy is immune to any persuasion short of destruction, and on that all else hinges. The U.S. has sought to prompt revolt in the Pashtun south of Afghanistan; the revolt won't come until the Taliban is destroyed. Pakistan complains that the bombing campaign is dragging on too long; it won't, if the Taliban is destroyed with dispatch. The State Department worries about forging the post-Taliban future; its leverage to do so will increase only when America destroys the Taliban with massive force.

At this stage, in other words, little ails the campaign in Afghanistan that can't be solved, or at least alleviated, by the ferocious application of American power. The administration pleads for patience, and we should indeed be patient about achieving our goals. But we should be impatient for the administration to take the actions necessary to achieve those goals. So far it hasn't. The administration has adopted a Clintonian approach to warfare, the usual cruise-missile strikes and air raids from 15,000 feet, with a dollop of special-operations raids. The war has been characterized by the incrementalism that has been the bane of American warmaking since Vietnam.

The Powell Doctrine has gone out of style in recent months, but if it sometimes seemed merely an excuse for never fighting wars, its emphasis on overwhelming force was correct. In the current circumstances, that means not only a stepped-up air campaign, but a large-scale effort to supply the Northern Alliance, and the use of American troops, at the very least to secure strategically important ground and possibly to prosecute the core of the campaign itself. It is unclear whether the assassination of Abdul Haq by the Taliban amounts to the catastrophic setback in the south that some have portrayed it as being. But its symbolism was disturbing: The Taliban killed an opponent, perhaps with their bare hands, while we sent an unmanned drone aircraft—too late—to assist him.

Winston Churchill wrote after Pearl Harbor that he knew that America's critics would be wrong. We wouldn't just "be a vague blur on the horizon to friend or foe." Osama bin Laden needs to know it too.

AT WAR II

No False Comfort

ADD, to the firemen and the cops on the list of murdered civil servants, the postmen. They never volunteered to be in the line of fire, but in the course of fulfilling Herodotus' description of the messengers of the Great King ("Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds"), death has struck them too, in the form of anthrax.

Anthrax is not contagious, and if caught early enough is treatable with antibiotics. The manner of its initial distribution—letters sent to government offices and media headquarters—was so small-bore that the FBI thought that it might be the work of homegrown McVeighites or freelance kooks rather than of our Islamist enemies. We will surely face worse. But anthrax is a deadly disease—in the parlance of the law of nations, a weapon of mass destruction. If, as seems most likely, this attack came from abroad, then the Rubicon has been crossed; the use of any just and necessary retaliation is warranted.

The objective damage that is being done has been amplified by a confused and scattershot governmental response. Responsible agencies gave divided counsels. Speaker Dennis Hastert and minority leader Dick Gephardt closed the House for several days. Arguably this was a correct decision: This is no time for false heroics. But in announcing the decision, Hastert spoke, in alarming and inaccurate terms, of a "plume" of anthrax astir on Capitol Hill. Far more culpable may be Senate majority leader Tom Daschle, who is accused by the other body of having agreed to a joint House-Senate adjournment, then of backtracking, so as to make the Republican-run House, and his possible 2004 presidential rival Gephardt, look like weak sisters. President Bush told us to go on with our lives, but perhaps he should have added a reservation for political beanball.

In dealing with the deadly unknown, everyone must adopt the principles so shiningly exemplified by Mayor Rudy Giuliani. *Know the facts.* Know what the government is doing; know what anthrax is, and how it is treated. *Never say what you do not know.* No premature conclusions, no hypotheticals. Don't try to rush the future, because it often turns out differently than you expect. *Leave the rhetoric to editorialists.* People want reassurance and hope, but they want the truth, and a sense of calm from the people in charge, even more. If there are no answers to pressing questions yet, that is disturbing. But people will be more far disturbed by false answers and baseless hopes.

President Bush can't take on a Giuliani-esque role himself: He simply has too much on his plate. He must rely for daily briefing and crisis management on those down the chain of command. Is Tom Ridge the right person to be at his right hand? Ridge has been given an almost impossible assignment—riding herd on the many relevant agencies, sustained only by slight authority and his access to Bush. He may wash out. In the early fascist-lite phase of the New Deal, Franklin Roosevelt relied on Gen. Hugh "Iron Pants" Johnson, a bluff military man, to knock heads. Johnson failed. Bush has to give his appointees a decent chance, then give them the hook if they cannot perform.

Bush's role is to fill the inevitable gaps with an aura of leadership. He lacks both the old-fashioned eloquence of Churchill and the suavity of FDR. He is best at mixing with citizens, as when he clasped the fireman at Ground Zero. While the conditions of a terror war limit his flexibility, he must make opportunities to play to his strengths.

But we also have to play to our strengths. Death was always in the equation of life; no one since Elijah has gone to Heaven without it. Some of us will face it sooner. Meanwhile, we have all the more reason to live, and enjoy our lives. They are better than the lives of the holy death hermits on the other side.

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POLITICS

Enough Bipartisanship

On October 23, in a White House meeting with Senate majority leader Tom Daschle, President Bush asked for Democratic cooperation in passing spending bills and confirming judges. As Byron York reported on National Review Online, Daschle replied with the back of his hand. The president, Daschle said, needs the spending bills and the judges more than the Democrats do and therefore has no leverage.

What Daschle was saying is that Bush has a greater stake than the Democrats in the continued functioning of the federal government: A partial shutdown is, after all, what will happen if spending bills do not pass in time. Since the September massacres, Bush has tried to govern as a bipartisan leader. The Democrats aren't playing along. So far, they have made only two concessions. They have restored funding for missile defense, public support for which has risen since the attacks; and they have acknowledged that George W. Bush is the commander-in-chief, hanging chads or no. Liberal intellectuals are now arguing that in return for these painful concessions the Republicans should give up—oh, their entire domestic agenda.

From the first days of the war, there have been warnings that the president should not "exploit" it, or the public support for him that came with it, to achieve domestic policy goals. It would certainly be wrong—a grave abuse of his moral authority—if Bush were to imply that Democrats are unpatriotic to balk at some of his policies. But he has shown no inclination to use such rhetoric.

Instead, it is conservatives who are being intimidated in this fashion. House Republicans make a reasonable case that it would be unwise to put the federal government in direct control of airport security. But rather than debate this case, Democrats (and, too often, the press) are accusing Republicans of putting a lower priority on Americans' lives than on their narrow partisan interest in keeping public-sector unions from growing.

It is also liberal Democrats who are exploiting the war to play judicial politics. If not for the war, the slow pace of judicial confirmations would be among the biggest partisan battles of the fall. But Pat Leahy, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, knows that Bush is too preoccupied to join that battle—and Leahy is therefore free to stall.

The Democrats, finally, are exploiting the president's desire for bipartisanship. When Bush's approval rating was in the low 50s, he won enactment of a tax bill largely along the lines he wanted. Now that everyone outside al-Qaeda supports him, Congress is considering a tax bill that contains almost nothing he really wants. Democrats are blocking cuts in capital-gains tax rates and any move to bring forward the effective date at which the top income-tax rate comes down. Instead, we are getting another round of ineffective rebates and a lot of new spending.

Just as the administration's pursuit of an international coalition has sometimes seemed to be at the expense of our war aims, so too has its pursuit of bipartisanship been at the expense of important national goals at home. The president surely believes that an effective economic stimulus would aid the war effort. He should be free to say so. And he is under no obligation, whether or not the policy under consideration is related to the war, to pretend he is less popular than he is. It is Bush, not congressional Democrats, who will ultimately be held responsible for the state of the economy and national security. Bipartisanship, as he is currently practicing it, is not helping him discharge his duties. He needs a new strategy.

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

Remarks by WFB at a dinner honoring Robert L. Bartley, October 17. The master of ceremonies was Daniel Oliver, and other speakers were David Frum, Christopher Buckley, Tom Wolfe, and Paul Gigot. Christopher Buckley's toast is reproduced first:

When my father asked me to be on the program I happily agreed, for I feel that it is now safe for the world to know about the Other Bob Bartley. Not Bob Bartley, the great writer of editorials, or Bob Bartley, the scourge of liberals, or Bob Bartley, the 34-year-old wunderkind, but—as the character Max Bialystock in the movie and play *The Producers* put it—"the Führer with a song in his heart."

I first met Bob at the National Review anniversary dinner in 1985. At this grand occasion—attended by President Ronald Reagan, blessings be upon his name—I found that I would be seated next to him. When I noticed this placement on the program, I was overcome with nervousness. I had worked in the previous years in the White House, where the *Wall Street Journal* editorial pages were taken as Holy Scripture, and now I was about to have several hours of close proximity to The Great Bob Bartley.

In something very close to panic, I sought guidance during the cocktail hour from someone I knew who was close to him personally. What was he like? I asked. What topics of conversation should I pursue? Did he have any hobbies? This person, who shall remain nameless, but whom, at the time, I underestimated, took in my distress and suavely replied, "Oh, not to worry. He's casual as can be. A great one for small talk. And he loves—*loves*—above all things in life—a really good off-color joke. As for hobbies, not many people know about it, but he has this thing for soap opera. He tapes them and watches them at night. He has an encyclopedic knowl-

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edge of *As the World Turns* and *Guiding Light*. Get him going on soap opera and you'll have to stuff a napkin in his mouth to shut him up."

I was greatly relieved by this intelligence. I would be spending the dinner hour not only with one of the great minds of our time, but also, clearly, with a regular guy, a man of the common touch. Indeed I found myself wishing I knew more about soap opera. Presently I found myself at Table 38 with the great man. I found him entirely pleasant, if not quite the bubbly small-talker I had been told to expect. Perhaps it had been a hard day at the office. So I awaited my chance. As soon as my wife and Edith Bartley were engaged in their own conversation, I leaned over and said, "So, how many lesbians does it take to screw in a light bulb?"

His reception of my little *jeu d'esprit* seemed somewhat muted. I put it down to the acoustics of the Grand Ballroom. When the main course had been served, I seized my chance to engage him in something I knew to be close to his heart. And in full hearing of all at the table said, "So, Bob, I hear you're a great aficionado of soap opera. Do you think Susan Lucci will finally win a daytime Emmy this year?" Again his response struck me as muted. Indeed, quite so. He looked at me owlishly, with an expression of seven-eighths disdain and one-eighth contempt, as if he had been suddenly thrust into the company of someone prematurely released from an asylum for the mentally feeble. My wife, who at the time worked for the CIA and was adept at evaluating disastrous situations, kicked me under the table.

Thus began—and ended—my long personal association with Robert Bartley. After the dinner was over, I sought out the person who had given me the pre-dinner briefing. I found him hiding in a bathroom stall, convulsed in hysterics.

I shot him, and disposed of the body in what is now the Meadowlands Sports Complex.

And yet as I look back upon it, I'm somewhat grateful to the fellow. If he hadn't given me that meretricious briefing, I probably would have attempted to engage the Great Man conversationally in such matters as the Laffer Curve, the conquest of Grenada, or David Stockman. And no doubt he would have found my offerings on those banal, if somewhat less alarming than the conversation I ended up offering him. This way I can at least look back and say that for a brief, if not shining, moment, I had the whole of Robert Bartley's attention. We connected. If he himself has no recollection of it—having put it out of his mind long ago—I do, a vivid one, and it remains somehow one of the great moments of my life, rococo, improbable, proud.

Thus the theme of my toast to him. I feel like the tumbler in the medieval tale who, amidst all the wise and scholarly monks, had only his one small talent to offer up, and performed his humble and awkward obeisance. But seldom do I get the chance to play the fool so gladly, or with such awe and respect.

* * *

WFB: It's obvious at this point that you are glad to join me in this opportunity to affirm our enthusiasm for the labors of our guest of honor. I had a preview of some of the remarks we have listened to, and so had an intimation of how well they'd express our feelings. I was not made privy to how our master of ceremonies would handle himself. But I was reminded of his meticulous sense of duty and of the depth of his self-assurance when I got his e-mail a week ago in which, responding to my ukase limiting the speakers to four minutes each, he caviled that four minutes would not allow time for anticipated applause.

He was certainly right, and he has now my own applause, spoken, not handclapped, happily wrenched from the four minutes I allotted myself, applause for his wit and ingenuity. Norman Podhoretz told me months ago that the highlight of the dinner in Indianapolis celebrating the anniversary of the Hudson Institute had been Dan Oliver's introductions. I would say as much for what we have heard tonight—except that to acclaim him as the evening's highlight would subordinate the performance of the Jim Cullum Jazz Band. Nothing spoken can, finally, compete with the spectrum of sentiments rendered in music, certainly not when competing with the music of Jim Cullum, with my idol John Sheridan at the keyboard. Dan Oliver has the option of turning, in later life, to music, for the next time around—which will be when? On the retirement of Paul Gigot?

On the other hand, that leaves open the question, Will we be *disposed* to

Continued on page 18

William F. Buckley Jr.

and the Editors of

National Review

cordially invite you to celebrate the career of

Robert L. Bartley

and to launch the movement to make him

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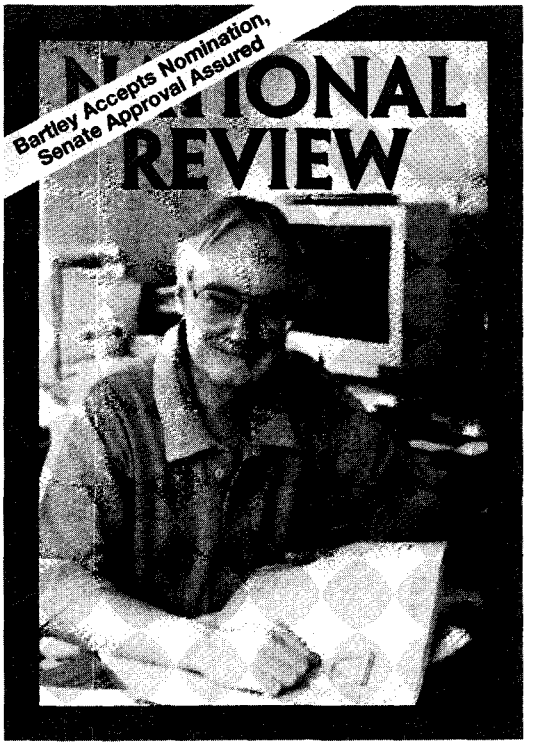
Continued from page 17

celebrate the retirement of Paul Gigot, down the line? That should be phrased more carefully, inasmuch as we are here, after all, to celebrate not Bob Bartley's retirement, but his achievements upon retiring. It never surprised me or my colleagues that Paul should achieve his high station. It isn't easy to bump into the datum from routine accounts of his biography, but we on 35th Street never made a secret of it that after leaving Dartmouth, he spent two years as an assistant editor of NATIONAL REVIEW, before going abroad to tame the alien beasts. How could he fail?—it being as unthinkable that he should do so as that supply-side economics will be discredited.

That will happen over Bob Bartley's dead body, and he seems very full of life tonight, however singed he and his staff were by the energumens of September 11. It is a great pleasure to read, in his celebration of the Seven Fat Years brought on by economic policies associated with President Reagan, his account of the evolution of the idea of supply side, accomplished bit by bit at myriad lunches at a little restaurant downtown—Michael 1, it's called—which seems to have served as the Garrick Club of Wall Street. There they met to reify their insight, to distill supply side and explore its ramifications. There, with Bob Bartley, we would come across others, including Bob Mundell and Jude Wanniski, and Craig Roberts and Alan Reynolds, and of course Arthur Laffer.

The crystallization of those insights was once described by John Kenneth Galbraith. Supply-side economics, he wrote, was deduced from a curve sketched by its author, Laffer, on a napkin, or a piece of toilet paper, whichever, normally put to better use. In a televised exchange on the subject, done in Miami in 1972 when we were reporting on the Democratic Convention, the Laffer Curve came up. I volunteered my own definition, which was that supply-side economics is the perception that economically valuable activity is generated by diminished taxation, regulation, and other impediments to commerce. He nodded his head condescendingly and told our audience on the *Today* show that all this was in any case irrelevant, given the predictable victory next November of Candidate George McGovern; wherein Professor Galbraith established that his vaticinations in politics were as reliable as those in economics.



It isn't the supply-side epiphany that memorializes the career of Bob Bartley at the *Wall Street Journal.* David Frum, telling us about it all as a one-time insider, and Paul Gigot, speaking to us from the perspective of the successor, hint at the great weight of his editorial deposit. His achievement was cumulative. Day by day, year by year, he showed his lively intelligence, and gave us his stylish defense of freedom, exploring its implications. He stood by convictions arrived at by research and analysis, and advanced a civilized integration of major human events into the democratic moral scene. To be sure, Mr. Clinton was not ejected by the Senate, but he *was* impeached. He did not go to jail, but he *was* disbarred. Reflection on the events of those years doesn't tell us that the conclusions of Robert Bartley were wayward, or that those of Senator Moynihan and the *New York Times* evolved from impetuosity, when they deplored Clinton's behavior, to considered constitutional and moral acuity when they chose to overlook it. It is closer to the point to note that what is finally tiresome is public indifference, not fidelity of standard. Cato taught us that, or tried to.

Modes of expression change. Not always for the better. It is a mystifying question, inasmuch as we don't know for sure how best to judge that which is better, or worse. I, to serve myself up as an offering on the altar of progress, am perfectly prepared to acknowledge that the NATIONAL REVIEW currently edited by a successor is an improvement, inconceivable though that would once have been thought.

As inconceivable as that the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal,* under Paul Gigot, will improve on that of our guest of honor, though we concede the hypothetical possibility. But the day will never come when the singular cast of Bob Bartley's thirty years will lose its special character, and the day won't come—certainly not in my lifetime, let alone Irving Kristol's, or, maybe, even Tom Wolfe's!—when studied reflection on the contributions of Bartley to right reason, and on his lovely expressions of it, will incur anything less than the gratitude we express here tonight.

—WFB

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■ AT WAR ■

Not-So-Special Operation

Bush adopts the Clinton way of war

ANDREW J. BACEVICH

WHEN it comes to America's ongoing war to destroy al-Qaeda and topple the Taliban, any outcome short of decisive victory is simply unacceptable. But as President Bush and other members of his administration have repeatedly emphasized, the present conflict is not simply an isolated challenge to be confronted and overcome so that life can return to normal. There will be no such return. Colin Powell has rightly noted that, after just slightly more than a decade, the prodigal era that began with the fall of the Berlin Wall has ended. The events of September 11 plunged the United States into a menacing new age of insecurity, in which we are destined to live out our days.

Thus, the ongoing Afghan war not only marks the Pentagon's response to the attack of September 11; it also provides a preliminary assessment of the nation's capacity to address the dangers awaiting it in this new era. In that regard, the war's first weeks offer little cause for comfort. Based on the available evidence, it appears that the world's most generously endowed and best-trained military forces lack the tools—conceptual as well as material—to deal effectively with the enemies we face. The conceptual deficit may be greater than the material one; it is not our weapons that have been found most seriously wanting in Afghanistan, but the ideas underpinning a deeply flawed "American Way of War."

President Bush has labeled the present struggle the "first war of the 21st century." Yet his administration's approach to waging that war does not differ appreciably from the methods on which the U.S. relied to wage the last wars of the previous century—namely, the sundry minor military adventures concocted by the Clinton administration during the '90s. In Operation Enduring Freedom, the Clinton legacy at its most pernicious lives on.

Mr. Bacevich directs the Center for International Relations at Boston University.

Reuters

Kabul military barracks after U.S. strike

Beginning in 1993 with its failed war in Somalia and continuing until Bill Clinton's last day in office—an occasion coinciding with U.S. air strikes against Iraq, all but unnoticed because they had become so commonplace—the Clinton administration evolved a distinctive way of employing U.S. military power. The hallmarks of this Clinton Doctrine included the following: inflated expectations about the efficacy of air power, administered in carefully calibrated doses; a pronounced aversion to even the possibility of U.S. casualties, combined with an acute sensitivity to "collateral damage" (the media converted these into the chief criteria by which to "grade" any operation); a reliance on proxies to handle the dirty work of close combat (Croats in Bosnia, for example, or the Kosovo Liberation Army in the war against Yugoslavia); vagueness when it came to defining objectives (for example, bombing campaigns conducted not with expectations of actually achieving a decision, but with an eye toward "diminishing" an adversary's capabilities); and a tendency to convert limited commitments into permanent obligations (remember the solemn promise that the troops would be out of Bosnia within a year?).

Republicans found much to dislike about this doctrine. Adding to their irritation was the fact that the Clinton administration—its upper echelons salted with Vietnam-era draft evaders and antiwar protesters—had blithely discarded the hard-learned precepts regarding the use of force that had emerged from Vietnam and were codified during the Reagan years. Clinton and his lieutenants routinely violated the tenets of the Weinberger Doctrine, or the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine as it became known after the Gulf War had seemingly demonstrated its validity for all time. The conviction that force should be reserved for vital interests, the emphasis on overwhelming force, the crafting of precise military objectives, the attention paid to "end states" and "exit strategies"—all of these commander-in-chief Clinton chucked overboard during his peripatetic journey from Somalia to Haiti to Bosnia to Kosovo, with periodic excursions against Iraq.

Among the benefits expected to flow from the return of the Republican national-security professionals to power in January 2001 was that this silliness would end. A rational and principled use of force would once again become a hallmark of U.S. policy.

In point of fact, that has not occurred. Rather, seized by the notion that the war against terror is completely "different" and utterly "new," members of the Bush administration have themselves driven the last nails into the coffin bearing the remains of Weinberger-Powell.

Thus, for example, in the aftermath of September 11, defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld instructed Americans to

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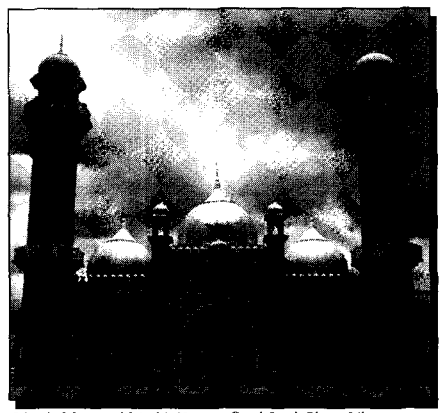

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JOHN SWANSON (Ph.D., Indiana University, 1978) is Professor of History at Assistant Provost for International Programs at the American University in Cairo, where he has taught since 1978. He has also served as coordinator for the Center for Arabic Study Abroad, as director of the Arabic Language Institute, and as a lecturer for the Smithsonian Associates and the Association of Yale Alumni.

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"Forget about 'exit strategies': We're looking at a sustained engagement that carries no deadlines. We have no fixed rules about how to deploy our troops." How will we know when we have won this sustained engagement? According to Rumsfeld, "victory is persuading the American people and the rest of the world that this is not a quick matter that is going to be over in a month or a year or even five years." That is, success lies in convincing Americans that real success will be a long time coming.

As a practical matter, the military bureaucracies that conduct wars cannot function without rules. If political leaders rocked back on their heels by the events of September 11 and its aftermath abdicate their responsibility to provide these rules, the generals will find them elsewhere—typically by adverting to the familiar. In short, they will fight the next war—whatever its character—by adhering to the routines they grew comfortable with in the last.

■

Caution and half-heartedness have been this campaign's signature characteristics.

■

The Afghan war has illustrated this penchant. As it unfolded over its first month, Operation Enduring Freedom resembled Bill Clinton's Operation Allied Force—the 1999 war against Yugoslavia—far more than it did George H. W. Bush's Operation Desert Storm.

Caution and half-heartedness—not boldness, not ferocity—have been this campaign's signature characteristics. Despite the appalling wounds that the nation sustained on September 11, the Bush administration has committed to this struggle only a small fraction of America's actual combat capabilities. Although the Bush team has not explicitly forsworn the use of ground troops, it has—apart from a small contingent of special-operations forces—made no preparations to take the fight directly to the Taliban. Through the campaign's first month, overt action by U.S. forces in (as opposed to above) Afghanistan was confined to a single raid by a hundred or so Army Rangers, as inconsequential as it was brief. With the Northern Alliance unable or unwilling to take on the role of an effective proxy ground army, the Pentagon appears to be pinning its hopes for success on protracted aerial bombardment. Yet even as Pentagon briefers characterize U.S. air attacks as "sustained," "continuous," and "intensifying," the actual level of effort has fallen well short even of that visited upon the Serbs in 1999—fewer than 100 attack sorties per day. Part of the problem is that such a backward, war-ravaged country offers a dearth of meaningful targets. President Bush vowed that he would not expend million-dollar missiles to knock over ten-dollar tents. But it will require the services of a very clever accountant to make a plausible case that the bombing of Afghanistan has been cost-effective.

None of this means that the cause is lost. Persistence and a couple of good breaks may yet enable the U.S. to get bin Laden and oust the Taliban. The enemy is unlikely to be as tough as the Pentagon, in its frustration, is making him out to be. When that victory is gained, parades and ceremonies honoring all who contributed to it will be in order.

But once the nation finishes patting itself on the back, the Bush administration should turn directly to the urgent task of rethinking how the U.S. fights its wars—devising new rules to guide the design and deployment of American military might. This new American way of war will not revive the tenets of Weinberger-Powell, which were never as useful as Republicans liked to believe, except as a way of avoiding another Vietnam. But if a return to the verities of the 1990s will be impossible, the administration's present position—that in this new age there are no fixed rules—is unacceptable. It is a formula for incoherence and exhaustion.

The precepts of the Clinton Doctrine never came close to offering an adequate basis for thinking about the proper use of force after the Cold War. But prior to September 11, the illusions nurtured by the likes of Bill Clinton and Madeleine Albright had exacted only the occasional penalty. After September 11, to permit the inanities of the Clinton Doctrine to survive would be deplorable. **NR**

■ **AT WAR** ■

Treason of the Cleric

The spiritual father of bin Ladenism

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

THE September 11 terrorists lived for a long period with the certain knowledge that they were preparing their own deaths. Nineteenth-century nihilists and bomb-throwers and Bolsheviks also planned long term to sacrifice their lives for the cause. They moved in circles of poverty and desperation. It is the use of leisure time that separates out today's Islamic extremists from their predecessors in fanaticism and terror.

For a start the September 11 terrorists had plenty of other people's money and credit cards for the easy life. They hired cars and traveled. They bought expensive gadgets and communications systems. As Muslims, they were forbidden alcohol, but they frequented bars, and stood drinks all round. Again as Muslims, they were also supposed not to run after women, but they resorted to call girls and strip joints. A Florida lap dancer, the gorgeous Samantha, informs us that she displayed her charms a few inches from one terrorist, but the fellow then tipped her a lousy twenty bucks. What makes these men particular is that they were about to destroy what they were evidently enjoying.

This ambivalence feeds the hatred of the United States felt by Islamic extremists. In the Islamic world, religion and custom combine to provide strict codes of conduct in public and private life. Like all things human, respect for these codes varies according to time and place. It was the West that introduced Muslims to quite other codes of conduct affecting issues great and small in their society. The challenge seemed all the greater because the West had the power of its science and technology, and the social organization to make the most of

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With Israel once again under attack, engaged for over one year in the Al-Aksa Intifada, it is time to reflect on the singular success of the Jewish state. Political Zionism was started in 1894 by Theodor Herzl, a journalist and thoroughly assimilated Austrian Jew, who was assigned by his Vienna paper to cover the notorious Dreyfus trial in France. The experience of seeing this Jewish officer being railroaded to a life sentence on Devil's Island led him to the recognition that life for Jews in Europe was untenable and that the solution of the "Jewish problem" lay in the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

What are the facts?

The Birth of a Dream. The return to Zion had for 2,000 years been the dream of Europe's dispersed Jews, the only hope in their miserable lives. "Next year in Jerusalem" had always been the watchword. But nothing was done to bring this dream to reality. Theodor Herzl organized the first Zionist Congress in Basel (Switzerland) in 1897 and political Zionism was born.

The concept of creating a new nation in what was then a sparsely-settled country was something totally new, never before attempted in the history of mankind. But Herzl's vision fired up world Jewry and especially the Jews of eastern Europe, who were despairing under the yoke of Russian oppression and recurring pogroms. Energized by Zionist aspirations, British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour issued his famous Declaration in 1917, by which Palestine was established as a national home for the Jewish people. In 1922, the League of Nations entrusted Britain with the Mandate for Palestine. Regrettably, and contrary to the Balfour Declaration and the requirement of the Mandate, Britain decided that the provisions for setting up a Jewish national home would not apply east of the Jordan River. That area constituted three-fourths of the territory of the Mandate and eventually became the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan. Only one-quarter of Palestine remained to fulfill the Jewish dream.

> "One would think that the world, especially the emerging nations, would wish to learn from Israel's example, so as to emulate its achievement. Unfortunately, almost the exact opposite is the case."

A Nation is Born and Succeeds. The modern state of Israel was founded in May 1948, just over 53 years ago—fifty years after Herzl formulated the concept. Immediately upon its creation, the country was invaded by the armies of five Arab countries. With a total Jewish population of only about 650,000, and with limited armaments and resources, the ragtag army of Israel defeated the combined might of the aggressors and established itself firmly within its boundaries. Transjordan (now renamed Jordan) stayed in possession of Judea/Samaria (now known as the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem. Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip. The price was very high. In this bloodiest of wars imposed on Israel, over 6,000 citizen-soldiers died -- over 1% of the population. It is as if the United States were to suffer a loss of close to 3 million people! It was not the only war that its neighbors visited on Israel. In the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel once again prevailed; it repossessed Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, and conquered the vast Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. And once more, in 1973, the Arabs tried to destroy Israel in the Yom Kippur War. Once more, they suffered defeat.

Despite being under constant attack and siege and having suffered over 20,000 dead in those defensive wars, Israel created social and political systems and an economy that continues to amaze experts worldwide. Israel is the only truly democratic country in the entire Middle East, with governmental structure and institutions comparable to those of the United States. Its economy—despite the enormous defense expenditures mandated by the aggressiveness of its neighbors and despite the effort and expense of having absorbed more than 2.5 million immigrants (four times the population at the creation of the state)—can only be described as a miracle of human accomplishment. Virtually everything—infrastructure such as roads, railroads, ports, airports, water carriers, electricity stations and distribution networks—had to be built from a minimal base. Today, Israel's economy is booming. It is a leader in high-tech technology; it has created one of the most advanced agricultural systems in the world; it is one of world leaders in economic growth rate; it has one of the highest per-capita incomes in the world; and it is the world leader in exports per capita.

We have in this century seen the demise of many "isms", the most prominent failures being those of Communism and Nazism. But Zionism, the national movement of the Jewish people, has flourished despite incredible obstacles—to an extent that the visionary Theodor Herzl could not have possibly imagined 100 years ago. One would think that the world, especially the emerging nations, would wish to learn from Israel's example, so as to emulate its achievements. Unfortunately, almost the exact opposite is the case. Goaded by the Arab nations, inalterably hostile to Israel and single-mindedly dedicated to its destruction, the United Nations has offered more than 100 resolutions censuring and condemning Israel's actions.

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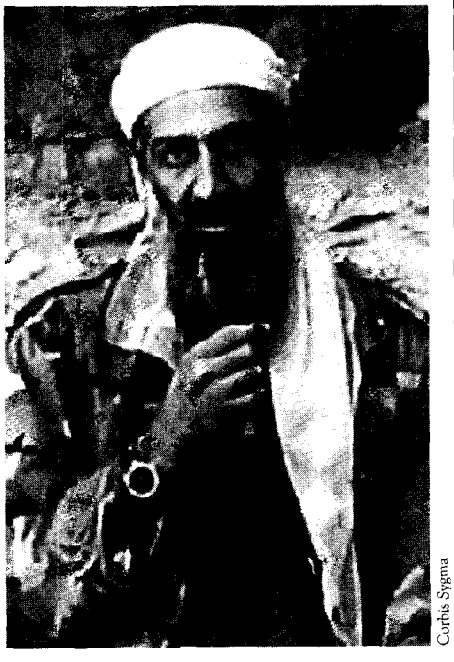
this power. Western codes of behavior liberated, even as they alienated, Muslims.

Between the wars, Muslims began to rebuild their traditional code of conduct into systematic resistance to the West. Hassan al-Banna was born in 1906 in Egypt. He became a schoolteacher. The Western way of life, he taught, was materialistic, based on products, with nothing to offer man except "sin, passion, drink, women, noisy gatherings, and showy attractions." Democracy to him only spread degeneracy. As pressure to adopt or imitate Western codes of conduct mounted, al-Banna came to believe that the West intended to destroy Islam "in the hearts of the faithful." What made Muslims special, in his thinking, was their religion, and they had to turn it into a weapon for offense and defense. For that purpose, he founded the Muslim Brotherhood, a militant and conspiratorial group that by 1940 or so claimed to have 40,000 members. Al-Banna was shot dead in 1949, probably by the Egyptian secret police, but branches of the Muslim Brotherhood exist today in every Arab country. Some of these branches have joined the establishment, others are still revolutionary; and the secret police keep close watch on them all.

Sayyid Qutb was also born in Egypt in 1906, and he took over and extended the fanaticization of Islam as preached by al-Banna. In the 20th century probably no other Muslim intellectual was so influential. Nothing in his early life seems to explain his development. Intelligent, said to have been unfailingly polite, he spoke good English and passed as cosmopolitan. At Cairo University he studied literature, and afterwards became a modernist critic commenting on books of the day. He had strong opinions about the role of the state in education, and accordingly was sent by the government to the United States to write a report on American education.

From 1948 to 1950 he lived and traveled in America. It would be fascinating to reconstruct his life here. Like the al-Qaeda terrorists today, he seems to have had an enjoyable time, but this only hardened his view that he had discovered the source of all evil. Seventeenth-century Puritans had that cast of mind: Their concentration on rooting out the sins of the flesh acknowledges the almost irresistible force of the temptation they felt. Did some other gorgeous Samantha tantalize Qutb? Was he put down, or patronized? His inquiring politeness, at any rate, transformed into anger and enmity.

Fellow Muslims in America, he said, apologized for themselves "as though they were defendants on trial." He on the contrary was determined to speak out and polemicize. *Radical Islam*, a pioneering study by Emmanuel Sivan, describes the conclusions to which Qutb came. Christianity with its notions of sin and redemption "made no sense at all." Capitalism was "predicated on monopoly and interest-taking, money-grubbing, and exploitation." American individualism "lacks any sense of solidarity and social responsibility other than that laid down by the law." He attacked "that crass and materialistic perception of life, that animal freedom which is called permissiveness, that slave market dubbed 'women's liberation.'"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Bin Laden: A projection of Qutb

Returning to Egypt, he resigned his government job, and became a full-time writer, rising through the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood to become head of its propaganda section. As Islam revealed itself helpless against both American capitalism and Soviet communism, his outlook grew more and more pessimistic and violent. He expounded a doctrine that the whole world was in a state of *jahiliyya*, an Arabic word denoting pagan barbarity. Pagan barbarians came in three sorts: Westerners (and that included the Soviets), Muslims who had adopted Western ideas, and the Jews who were always conspiring.

Westerners were "culturally poisoning" Islam, and Qutb brought in witnesses to that effect ranging from Arnold Toynbee to (odd as it may seem) the spies and traitors Burgess and Maclean, then in the headlines as they defected to Moscow. The West offered Muslims a model of moral and social depravity. Islam had to wage all-out war against all the types of modernity on offer; no compromise was possible. Muslims who adopted ideas like nationalism or the sovereignty of the people were collaborators, stooges, traitors. More frightful still, these apostate Muslims were willing tools of the Jews, who were even more utterly beyond redemption. A "massive army of Jewish agents in the form of professors, philosophers, doctors and researchers—sometimes also writers, poets, scientists and journalists" were conspiring to weaken and deform Islam. He was the first to label them generically as "Orientalists." The Palestinian-American Edward Said later elaborated a more sophisticated version of this fantasy.

In the Egypt of the Fifties, Gamal Abdul Nasser was advocating nationalism as the basis of an Arab revival, but actually building a Soviet-style one-party state—as complete a dead end in its way as Qutb's Islamic rigidity. To the Muslim Brotherhood this was sacrilege, and they almost succeeded in assassinating Nasser. Qutb duly sanctioned such terror. The Egyptian president responded in kind, and had Qutb and some 20,000 other opponents arrested. Brought to court, Qutb drew attention to marks of torture on his body. In prison for nine years, he wrote books that continue to resonate throughout the Arab world. In 1966 Nasser had him hanged.

More than a disciple, the Saudi-born Osama bin Laden seems like a projection of Qutb. The child of a well-connected Saudi entrepreneur and billionaire, the young bin Laden was also well educated, learned English, and initially became a cosmopolitan. Photographs show him in

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Western clothes, enjoying himself in Oxford and Geneva and in the U.S., and in the company of girls too. His change of heart is not yet documented, but the sense of helplessness and frustrated power that Qutb had seems to motivate bin Laden as well to wage all-out war against Western types of modernity.

Just as Qutb was willing to use terror to stop Nasser, so bin Laden is prepared to overthrow the monarchy in his native Saudi Arabia. The country resists the presence of foreigners within its borders, and forbids them completely from entering the holy cities of Mecca and Medina (imagine, by the way, the uproar if the Vatican allowed in only Catholics). Permitting American bases on the holy soil—indeed sheltering behind those bases against other Muslims such as Saddam Hussein—King Fahd and the royal family are selling out, nothing less than traitors to Islam. This is Qutb's pagan barbarity, and cause for Islamic war. Instead of arresting him for sedition and hanging him as Nasser hanged Qutb, the Saudi royal family knew that bin Laden had influential friends at court and they merely outlawed him. Weak and unpopular as they are, the Saudi rulers prefer this kind of double-dealing to any forthright decision, and so they end up in tangles of self-inflicted confusion. In the same hope of having things both ways, they subsidized the Taliban who are providing bin Laden with a safe haven in Afghanistan from which to operate against their own interests. Had they been more resolute, they would not now be relying on the United States to eliminate on their behalf so mortal an enemy.

In the cases of Qutb and bin Laden, militant Islam legitimizes the objective of taking power. But in their outlook and language resonates a terrible sense of inferiority. They have to get even. Hate and terror here are the counterparts of the tormenting admiration these men have for the supremacy of the West, and even for the Jews, everlastingly conspiring. It's schizophrenic, and that's the trouble. **NR**

■ **AT WAR** ■

Liberation, Not Containment

How to win the war on Wahhabism

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

To win a war, you must first identify the enemy. In our current war, the enemy's name is Wahhabism.

The Wahhabis, based in Saudi Arabia, are the extremist sect that provides religious support for the horrors inflicted by Osama bin Laden and other Islamic terrorists. Wahhabism emerged in the

Mr. Schwartz is completing his next book, *The Two Faces of Islam.*

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benighted wastes of Nejd in central Arabia in the middle of the 18th century. Other religions had already experienced bouts of revivalist utopianism, but by the time Wahhabism emerged, these other movements had already been redirected into socially constructive paths: The apocalyptic frenzies that gripped Christendom from the time of St. Francis had been reformulated, through Protestantism, into the intellectual and economic revolutions of the European bourgeoisie. And Judaism had passed through a similar revitalization, embodied in the kabbalistic radicalism of the 17th-century "false messiah" Sabbatai Zevi; the Sabbataean heresy, too, had been redirected into a modernizing, Enlightenment trend.

Wahhabism might at first seem utterly different from these parallel phenomena. Protestantism, after all, became the state faith of the British Empire; and neo-Sabbataeanism led to the assimilation of Jews into Christian Germany and Poland. Both of these outcomes grew out of geopolitical opportunities—chiefly, the expansion of trade, or what today would be called globalization. Protestantism led the English, and assimilation drove the Jews, to new worlds in every sense, to encounters with realities previously unknown to them.

No such opening, however, was available to the shepherds and camel drivers of Nejd. Wahhabism "reformed" and "revived" Islam not by opening to the world, but by turning deeply inward, becoming narrow, rigid, literalistic, and puritanical—before finally exploding into a violent challenge against the Islamic civilization of the Ottomans. The Wahhabis' anti-Ottomanism resembled the Protestant rebellion against the papacy, and some observers have seen in it an explicit emulation of the Christian Reformation. But then something strange happened to Wahhabism: It leaped far ahead in the process of the politicization of faith to anticipate the coming of totalitarianism. Before Jacobinism, Leninism, fascism, Stalinism, Japanese militarism, and Hitlerism, there was Wahhabism. It was as if the Arabs of Nejd were so far behind the rest of the world that they were ahead of it.

We too often forget that all of the totalitarian threats to the global democratic consensus emerged from nations lagging in their development, and represented attempted short cuts to economic and geopolitical power. Russia, coming late to a modern economy, tried to rush ahead by fabricating the socialist "new man"; Italy and Germany, slow in their national unification and delayed in the competition for colonies, produced fascism; Japan, closed to the world until the mid 19th century, launched itself into the brutal subjugation of the Asian mainland.

If these countries were handicapped in their modernization, Nejd was apparently retarded beyond remedy, and the Wahhabis did not attempt a serious assault beyond the Arabian peninsula until centuries had passed. But then another strange thing happened: Arabian oil became a key factor in global economics, and—for Wahhabism—an asset comparable to Hitler's military industries. Imagine Microsoft headed by a president of the United States—who also happens to be a follower of David Koresh—and you will have an idea of Wahhabism's material base.

■

Before Jacobinism, Leninism, fascism, Stalinism, Japanese militarism, and Hitlerism, there was Wahhabism.

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But the Wahhabis' interests are not economic, and do not involve intervention in the petroleum markets; they are ideological and religious (rather than secular and nationalistic). Like Nazism, Wahhabism is separatist and supremacist. It argues for a world in which saved, purified Muslims will have no contact with Christians, Jews, and non–Wahhabi Muslim "unbelievers." Prior to the stabilization of the Saudi regime in the 1930s, Wahhabism—like Italian fascism—drafted the nation's young men into a militia living in disciplined colonies and drilled in hatred and sadism toward alleged foes. Like Soviet Communism, it recruits cadres worldwide. And like Japanese militarism, it is utterly ruthless.

All of these earlier threats had in common their leaders' conviction of a superiority permitting them to dictate to the whole human race. That is why the West had to destroy Hitlerism: because Hitler made up his own rules (in dealing with the Jews, the rest of Europe, and international law). The Italians did the same in despoiling Ethiopia, and the Japanese in massacring millions of Koreans and Chinese. Resisting such forces is the backbone of U.S. foreign policy: It motivated Truman's stand on Berlin, and Kennedy's on the Cuban missiles, as well as Reagan's support for the Nicaraguan contras and, yes, the Afghan mujahedin.

It's true that the war against bin Ladenite terror—that is to say, the anti-Wahhabi war—is no more about Islam per se than the war on Hitler was about Nietzsche, or the Cold War was about socialist economics. But the war on Hitler was fought in Germany, and the Cold War was fought against Communists: The war against terrorism, too, must be fought where the enemy is, and that means the Islamic countries. Wahhabism has declared a war to the death against us, as the Nazis and Communists did. And we must fight Wahhabism to the death, to secure not only our survival but that of Islam itself as a great religion and civilization. Bin Laden and his Saudi backers threaten to bring the world of Islam crashing down in flames as Hitler did Berlin. But just as we liberated the Germans from Hitler and the Japanese from Tojo, we can liberate the world's Muslims from bin Laden and his Saudi accomplices. Bombing the Taliban and other extremists will no more destroy Islam than the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki destroyed Japanese culture.

Of course, there is a short-term alternative: containment. The Saudi ruling family, the Sauds, repressed the Wahhabis' Ikhwan military brotherhood in the 1930s, and—if it were demanded of them—they would probably do it again; they would cut off funding for such groups worldwide, and more effectively restrict their influence inside Saudi Arabia. But this would be a temporary solution analogous to accepting an imperial Japan after World War II, a Japan in which the militarist generals were deposed but left unpunished. The Sauds repressed the Ikhwan, but later resorted anew to Wahhabism as a geopolitical weapon; for the West, that is simply an unacceptable prospect. Wahhabism must go.

And the way to get rid of it is to work with the millions of anti-Wahhabi Muslims. Here, too, the analogies with 20th-

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century totalitarianism offer cause for optimism. Hitler claimed to fight for Europe against the Bolsheviks and the Anglo-American Jewish plutocrats, but Europe did not support him; most countries produced armed resistance movements against Nazi occupation. The Japanese militarists appealed for Asian support against the Americans in the Philippines, and against the British in Malaya and Burma; but Japanese occupation turned the Filipinos and Burmese against Tokyo, and when Douglas MacArthur returned to Manila he was hailed as a liberator. In the end MacArthur was also hailed as a liberator in Tokyo, and the Germans turned to Truman, not to some Nazi straggler, to hold the line against the Russians in Berlin.

Our task now is comparable to that which faced the World War II generation. We will have to fight Wahhabi terrorism—bin Laden, his Egyptian and Algerian allies, his stooges elsewhere in the Islamic countries, his backers in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, and Wahhabized fringe groups like the Taliban and Hezbollah—with the faith and firmness we drew on in beating the Nazis. And as part of that commitment we should directly and actively assist the millions of anti-Wahhabi Muslims.

Our action against Wahhabism should begin with a series of ultimatums to the Saudis. The first demand ought to be full and immediate compliance with airline-security, banking, and other antiterrorist measures the Saudis have flouted. The second: the full investigation, arrest, and handing over to the U.S. of all active coconspirators with bin Laden found in Saudi Arabia. The third: an immediate stop to all funding of overseas Wahhabism, including Wahhabi imams and interest groups in the U.S. These three actions would provide more valuable support to our antiterrorist effort than would any direct military assistance. If compliance is not immediate and total, we should freeze all Saudi assets in the U.S.

If the world is to be made safe from terrorism, Wahhabism must suffer a definitive, irreversible historic defeat. Liberation, not containment: Only in a world where Wahhabism has been crushed can we hope for the survival of world peace, and of a legitimate, peaceful Islam. **NR**

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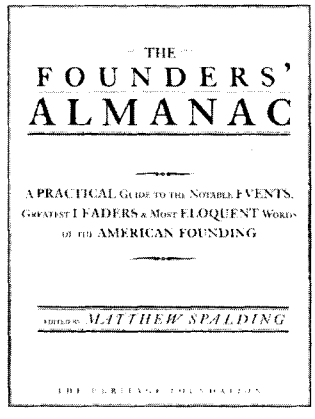
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■ AT WAR ■

Identity Unknown

The case for civilizational confidence

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

Seville

ATOP this city's vast Gothic cathedral—built in a century-long surge of pious enthusiasm following the Christian *Reconquista* of Moorish Andalusia—stands the figure of Faith. The irony of making Faith a weathervane has often been noted; but it does not seem a wholly inapposite comment on a post-Christian Spain and a post-Christian Europe as they face a Muslim world increasingly radicalized by Osama bin Laden. Neglected and ignored, Faith has been whirling pointlessly in the last few decades. Buffeted now by this hot reviving wind from the East, however, will Faith swing back into fashion, either in her original religious intensity or diluted into a sort of cultural loyalty?

If the current war turns into a full-scale clash of civilizations, the front line will be here in Andalusia. It was here that a splendid and relatively liberal Islamic civilization flourished while the rest of Europe languished through the Dark Ages. Some Muslims undoubtedly cherish fantasies of a reverse *Reconquista*. "The tragedy of Andalusia"—a remark generally attributed to bin Laden but said to have been actually uttered by his lieutenant—reflects a nostalgia felt by many Muslims. They see the seeds of a historic reversal in North Africa's fast-growing population of young Muslims, many of whom smuggle themselves into Spain as illegal immigrants. Most of them make their quiet way onward to the welfare states of Northern Europe; some stay to work in Spain; all swell the Muslim diasporas of Western Europe, which al-Qaeda hopes to exploit for both recruitment and political influence.

No similar cultural jingoism exists on the European side. In their reflections on the Moorish and Christian monuments, the guidebooks (published, of course, before September 11) are firmly biased towards the Islamic side. One cites the *Reconquista* as an "unparalleled catastrophe" for Andalusia and paints it as a victory for dogmatism and cruelty over civilized tolerance. The Inquisition, of course, was hardly one of the finer moments in Christian history; but the guidebooks don't show an equal fervor in condemning the oppressive rule of later Moorish dynasties, like the Almoravids and the Almohads.

This pro-Muslim bias is the result of several intellectual trends: the academic convention of cultural relativism; the tendency of many historians of Islam, perhaps overreacting to negative stereotypes, to become propagandists for their subject; the decline of Christian belief and social influence; and the habit of respecting other cultures as unities while treating the West as a kind of multicultural supermarket in which Western civilization is merely one rather dusty shelf. To these trends politicians add appeasement, both diplomatic (of neighboring North Africa) and electoral (of local Muslim constituencies).

■

If the current war turns into a full-scale clash of civilizations, the front line will be here in Andalusia.

■

Thus, a former Spanish defense minister, Alberto Oliart, writing on the post–September 11 crisis in the English-language version of *El País*, observes that "the West owes much to Islam, and more so in the case of Spain, whose culture and language have deep roots in the splendid culture of al-Andalus." That is true, of course. What is also true, however, is that medieval Spain's culture and personality were forged in *opposition* to Moorish rule and Islam—and that the self-identity of Catholic Spain persisted until very recently. "Fusionist" theories of culture become plausible only when the religious passions inspiring the fusion have cooled down to the mildness of an English summer. And that, plainly, does not describe Islam and the West just now.

Indeed, Osama bin Laden, in his effort to unify the Islamic world against us, claims that the West as a whole still possesses a well-defined cultural identity rooted in Christianity. At present, that is an exaggeration at best. Might his Islamic crusade, however, not stimulate the revival of some kind of vibrant, self-conscious Western identity, and accompanying cultural loyalty?

If it were left to governments or intellectuals, no such revival could occur. Governments do not want such thorny subjects even to be raised. And intellectuals largely follow Francis Fukuyama in believing Islam to be an implausible ideology for modern man, no competition for Western philosophies—and so not worth bothering about.

It is possible, even likely, that Fukuyama will prove prescient in that long run when we are all dead. In the short term, however, Islam (including radical Islamism) seems perfectly plausible to large numbers of modern men across the world—including some who have lived and been educated in the West. And though the economic backwardness and military incompetence of current Islamic societies ensures that they would be defeated by the West in any serious clash of civilizations, radical Islamist terrorists are capable of inflicting very serious damage and causing thousands of deaths in lesser conflicts.

After all, radical Islamists have three advantages on their side: demography (the populations of Islamic nations are increasing while the West suffers a "birth dearth"); rapidly growing Islamic diasporas in the West, fueled by illegal immigration; and official Western policies of multiculturalism (which not only encourage immigrants to retain their original cultural identity but even promote the "de-assimilation" of previously assimilated minorities in the West).

All of this lays the groundwork for a clash of civilizations—*within* the West. British newspaper readers woke up last week to the news that several hundred British Muslims, some born and educated in Britain, were volunteering to fight with the Taliban in Afghanistan against, among others, soldiers in the

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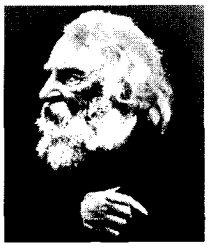

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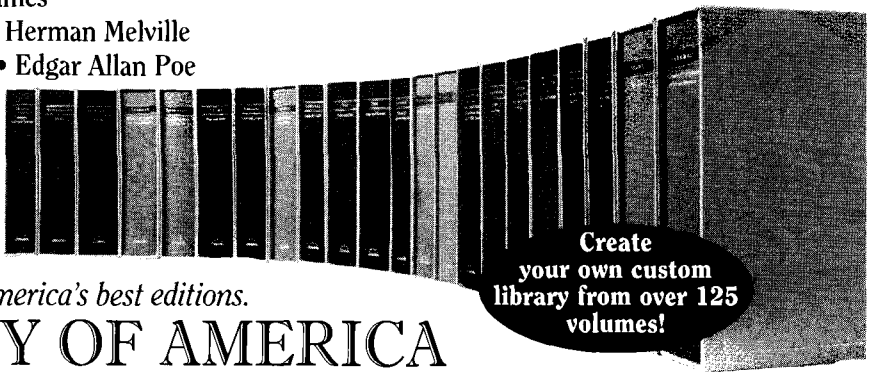

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British army. An Islamic cleric, justifying their actions, declared that all Muslims belonged to one Islamic nation and that the British government was an illegitimate regime to which they properly owed no allegiance. Similar statements have been made over the years, but no one has been brought before the courts. Lady Thatcher was vilified recently merely for suggesting that Muslim clerics had not condemned the World Trade Center attack strongly enough. And though most of the public would plainly like to see a strong official response—such as prosecuting the Taliban's local recruiters for treason—most politicians (thinking of crucial Muslim votes in marginal constituencies) flounder about helplessly. This makes public panic—and thus the likelihood of vigilante action against perfectly innocent people in turbans—more likely.

What the politicians fail to grasp here is that the vigorous assertion of a strong Western cultural identity would not divide Muslims from other citizens; it would divide ordinary law-abiding Muslims (including parents worried that their sons might be led astray by Taliban propaganda) from radical Islamists. It would also push those Muslims with divided hearts in the direction of prudently reconciling their religious beliefs with their duty of local patriotic allegiance. Nor should this prove difficult; a Western identity, as it has evolved since the Reformation and the Enlightenment, is compatible with a wide range of religions and religious practices—including the Islam of most Muslims around the world.

Not for the first time, politicians might usefully be infected by the patriotism of the people. It is the unwillingness of the West to defend itself that fuels the suspicion that it is weak and cowardly. A decent respect for oneself is the start of obtaining respect from other cultures. Once the West begins to proclaim its own worth, the threat of terrorism will shrink to manageable proportions. We will be able to respond to the threat from Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda as Bismarck replied to Palmerston's threat to intervene in Schleswig-Holstein: If the British army lands in Schleswig-Holstein, it will be arrested by the police. **NR**

■ AT WAR ■

Trouble Area

The failure of Middle Eastern studies

JOHN J. MILLER

AMERICAN intervention in the Middle East will cause "massive unrest throughout the Arab world." The international coalition built to support it won't hold, because the U.S. declines to condemn Israel—and Muslim countries can't "withstand this sort of double standard." The actual war won't go well, either: "It won't be easy to force them out without resorting to bloody hand-to-hand combat. It's my guess that they'll fight and fight hard, even if you bomb them with B-52s."

These dire warnings ought to give President Bush pause, as they come not from ordinary scholars of the Middle East but from men who would seem to be scholars among scholars: the current president of the Middle East Studies Association (R. Stephen Humphreys of the University of California at Santa Barbara) and a former one (Rashid Khalidi of the University of Chicago). Yet they were talking to a different President Bush, and their ten-year-old alarms dealt specifically with the Gulf War. They were, as it happens, wrong on each count: There was no anti-American revolution throughout the Arab world, the coalition against Saddam Hussein stood strong, and Iraqi soldiers presented little resistance to Operation Desert Storm.

Much has been made in recent weeks of the CIA's failure to penetrate Osama bin Laden's terrorist cells and prevent thousands of deaths—a failure in what the spooks call "human intelligence." Left almost untouched in the recriminations following September 11, however, is another kind of human-intelligence disaster, which has occurred at American universities. Despite receiving millions of dollars in federal grants over several decades to develop an expertise on Islam and Arab culture, the academy has done little but offer spectacular misreadings and terrible advice. Higher education has seen plenty go wrong over the last generation, but the inability—and often the refusal—of professors in Middle Eastern studies to prepare the country for mass terrorism or help it cope with the aftermath may eventually be considered one of its most damaging failures.

When the field of Middle Eastern studies was first conceived in the 1940s and 1950s, it was part of a broader movement known as "area studies." There was a consensus that Americans didn't know enough about parts of the world they would increasingly have to engage during the Cold War, such as the Soviet Union, East Asia, and Latin America. The Middle East initially didn't receive as much attention, but it, too, developed as an academic field and took on greater importance over time.

Scholars in the U.S. had not neglected the Middle East—the American Oriental Society was founded in 1842—but their interests lay primarily in antiquity. In 1949, the Committee on Near Eastern Studies observed that "at no university does there appear to be a person who would claim to be an expert in the economics, sociology, or politics of the present-day Near East." Middle Eastern studies promised to change this by approaching the region with the hardheaded methodologies of social science. Above all, it promised to be *relevant*. Private foundations were crucial supporters in these early years, but it wasn't long before Congress poured tax dollars into the endeavor. In 1958, Middle Eastern studies started to win financial aid through the National Defense Education Act, a funding mechanism that continues to this day. In 1962, the government devoted foreign-currency surpluses to the purchase of Arabic books—massive numbers of which were then donated to research libraries. Because of the government's enormous investment, today there are about 125 centers and programs devoted to Middle Eastern studies, located at colleges and universities across the country. They have awarded thousands of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. The Middle East Studies Association (MESA), the leading professional organization of Mideast spe-

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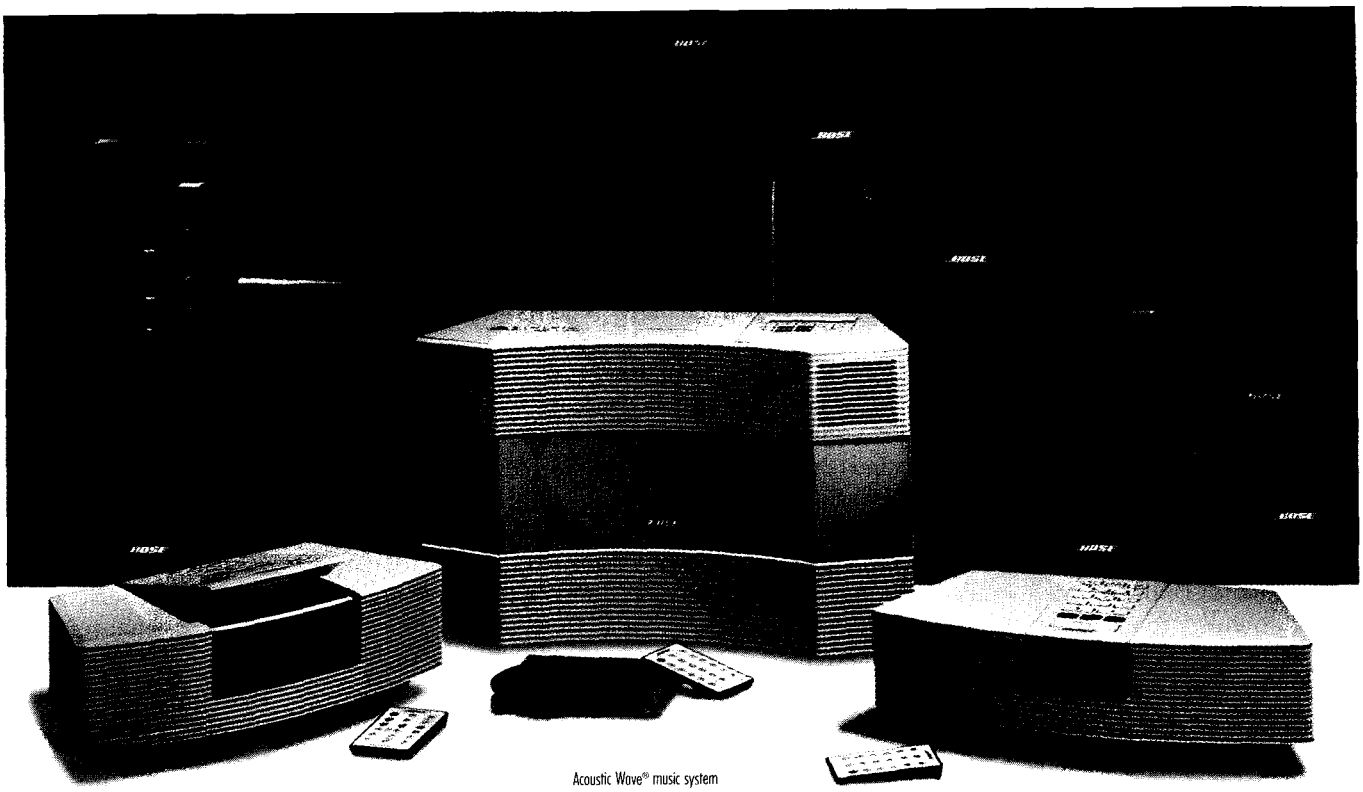

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cialists, boasts a current membership of more than 2,600.

As part of its quest for relevance, Middle Eastern studies came to think that it should not merely understand current realities but also advocate positive changes. Scholars became reformers; professors believed they could help nudge the Arab world toward modernization. These motives seemed innocent—even beneficial—but they complicated the scholars' supposed mission, because interpretation and activism are two different things. An aggravating weakness of Middle Eastern studies is that, like area studies generally, it is not moored in traditional academic disciplines. "Area studies are profoundly touched by what's immediate," says Philip Siegelman, a China specialist retired from San Francisco State University. "They're under the constant threat of losing their objectivity and distance." Area studies—along with women's studies, black studies, and the like—are responses to dramatic events and social movements. They typically attract students and teachers with passionate political commitments that wind up impeding objective research. Other disciplines are hardly immune to these corruptions, but area studies and their kin are especially vulnerable. Although several sub-fields of Middle Eastern studies have flourished—there is much outstanding scholarship in early history, legal history, and art and architecture—these subjects are far removed from contemporary strategic concerns. It is no coincidence that some of today's truly great interpreters of the Middle East, such as Bernard Lewis of Princeton and Fouad Ajami of Johns Hopkins, have not emerged from institutions associated with Middle Eastern studies.

For many years, Middle Eastern studies was gripped by optimism about the region's future and its supposedly inevitable embrace of modernity. The field then experienced a series of demoralizing blows, starting with the 1967 Arab–Israeli War and continuing through the 1970s with the Lebanese civil war and the Iranian revolution. Edward Said's seminal book, *Orientalism* (1978), made matters worse by indicting virtually all previous Western scholarship on the region as ill conceived and racist. These disruptions came at a time when the Left was beginning its long march through the faculty lounges. As Martin Kramer reports in *Ivory Towers on Sand*, a comprehensive new monograph published by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, "Middle Eastern studies came under a take-no-prisoners assault, which rejected the idea of objective standards, disguised the vice of politicization with the virtue of commitment, and replaced proficiency with ideology." Scholarly standards suffered so much that perhaps the most fundamental problem with Middle Eastern studies today is that many of the so-called experts associated with it can't communicate in Arabic. "How are you supposed to understand the culture if you can't even speak the language?" asks one eminent historian of the Middle East.

Despite these problems, MESA continued to insist on the relevance of the field. In 1979, it called Middle Eastern studies "one of this country's greatest resources for understanding and learning to live with an ever more vital part of the world." Yet it was about to embark upon its most breathtaking failure, something so wrongheaded that it bordered on the delusional—and left the U.S. woefully unprepared for September 11.

By Roman Genn

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Middle Eastern studies professors consistently downplayed the threat posed by Islamic radicalism. Many of them suggested that Islamic movements were in fact engines of democracy and reform. John Esposito of Georgetown University, a leading light in Middle Eastern studies, predicted that the Islamic violence of the 1980s would wane; in 1992, he wrote that "the Nineties will prove to be a decade of new alliances and alignments in which the Islamic movements will challenge rather than threaten their societies and the West." In congressional testimony that same year, Esposito's colleague John Voll, on the eve of becoming MESA president, defended the Islamic government of Sudan (currently one of seven states on the State Department's list of terrorism sponsors): "It is not possible, even using exclusively Western political experience as a basis for definition, to state that if a system does not have two parties, it is not democratic." In order to appreciate this emerging reality, wrote Esposito and Voll together in 1994, Americans would "have to transcend their narrow, ethnocentric conceptualization of democracy." Anybody who disagreed with these rosy assessments was treated with suspicion. As Nobel laureate V. S. Naipaul recently told the *New York Times*, "That is the trouble with writing about Muslim people. There are people of the universities who want to run you out of town, and they're paid to."

A related pastime among the Middle Eastern studies set involved the search for a "Martin Luther" of the Islamic world—a figure who would spark a liberal religious reformation. In his monograph, Kramer describes several pathetic episodes of American scholars advancing one candidate after another for this role, only to have their hopes dashed when their favorites proved to be anti-Semites or intellectual lightweights. Their wishful efforts would seem comic if they had not had the side effect of distracting scholars from more vital tasks. Writes Kramer: "The academics were so preoccupied with 'Muslim Martin Luthers' that they never got

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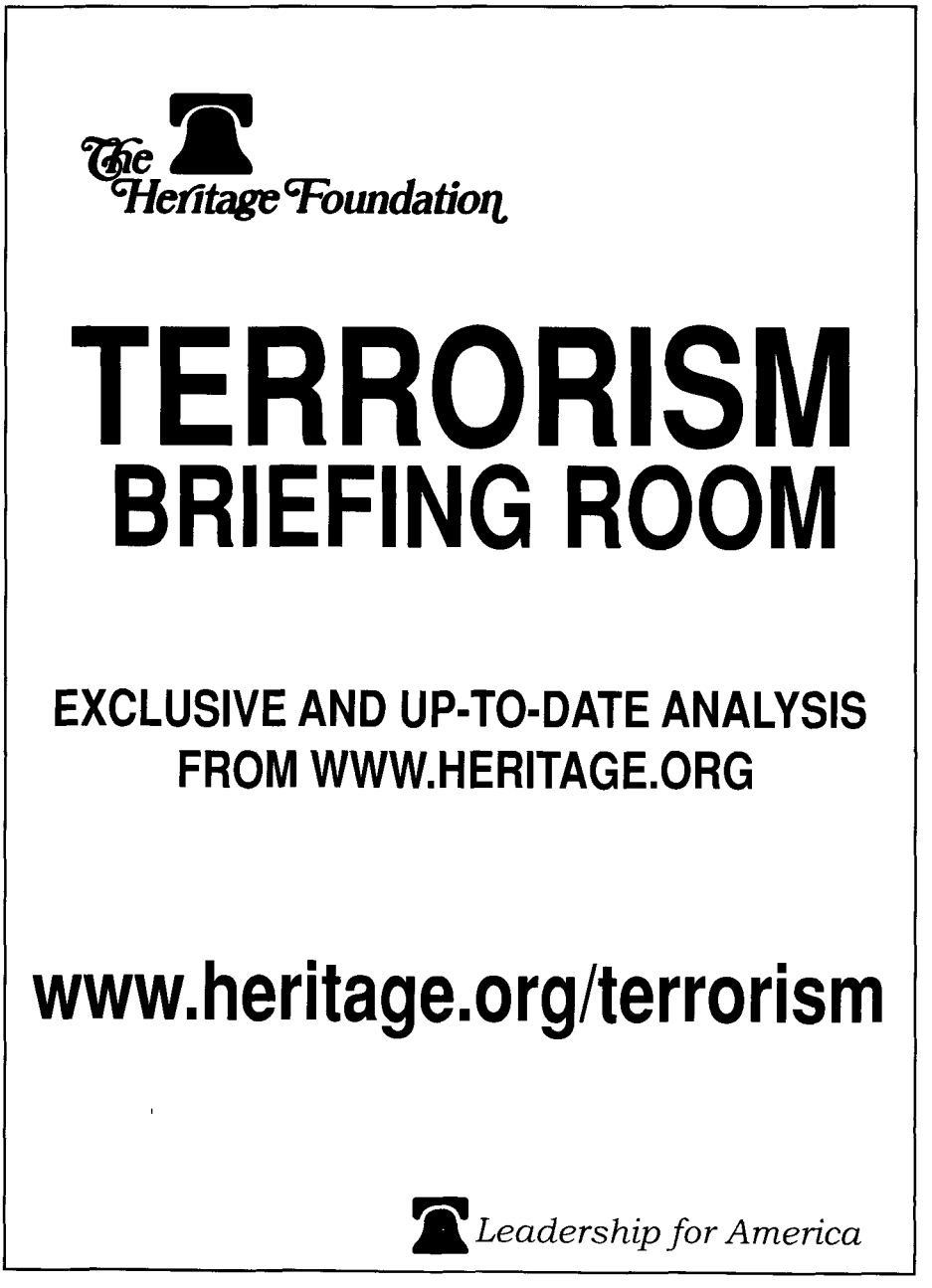
around to producing a single serious analysis of bin Laden and his indictment of America." The closest thing to it, perhaps, is a 1998 *Foreign Affairs* article by Bernard Lewis; the best book-length treatment is probably *Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War on America*, by congressional staffer Yossef Bodansky, published two years ago. The Taliban also has escaped the critical attention of Middle Eastern studies; the best book on it is by Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani journalist.

Despite all the happy talk about Islamic democratization, terrorists continued to direct incredible levels of violence against the U.S. throughout the 1990s, attacking barracks in Khobar, embassies in Africa, and the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Middle Eastern studies was so unwilling to confront this grim reality that shortly after terrorists first tried to topple the towers, in 1993, Columbia University's Richard Bulliet responded by organizing a conference not to explain what had happened or why, but to address anti-Muslim prejudice. "Some Muslims from New York are going to be tried for seditious conspiracy to commit criminal acts," he noted. "A guilty verdict will send a chill of fear throughout America." Never mind the chill of fear that the terrorists themselves sent through their murder of six people, and attempted murder of thousands of others; it was a chill that perhaps did not make us shiver enough. Earlier this year, Sarah Lawrence College professor Fawaz A. Gerges added to the chorus by saying Americans were not sufficiently complacent about terrorism: "To what extent do terrorist 'experts' indirectly perpetuate this irrational fear of terrorism by focusing too much on farfetched horrible scenarios? Does the terrorist industry, consciously or unconsciously, exaggerate the nature and degree of the terrorist threat to American citizens?" (Note that when Gerges speaks of "the terrorist industry," he isn't referring to bin Laden's al-Qaeda network.)

The anti-American sentiment runs so deep that it's not too much to ask whose side some of these scholars are on. Anne Joyce, the editor of *Middle East Policy*, once wrote that Jewish violence directed against Palestinians is the product of America's racist culture, "in which young Jews learned to fear and resent their inner-city neighbors. They went to the Israeli (wild) West Bank, where they could tote machine guns and harass at will." Many scholars have even celebrated hostile regimes. At a 1988 conference in Tehran, Hamid Algar of the University of California at Berkeley praised Iran's "proud record of resistance to aggression." The Khomeini government, said Columbia's Bulliet, threatened the West "not so much because of its own characteristics but because of European intolerance for any fundamentally different ideology." Harvard professor Nur O. Yalman, writing in the *Harvard Crimson* on September 21, called bin Laden's deeds "an act of blood revenge" and explained, "There had been too much murder going on in Israel and the West Bank for no extreme reprisals to take place." Similar comments had prompted Norvell B. De Atkine and Daniel Pipes to write in *Academic Questions* five years ago that MESA had transformed itself from "an American organization interested in the Middle East to a Middle Eastern one that happens to meet in the United States."

Despite all this, Middle Eastern studies professors continue to believe they have much to offer—but not to the



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government. Even though Congress is a leading patron of Middle Eastern studies, many scholars won't advise policymakers. When an academic research program run by the Pentagon solicited papers from federally supported Middle East studies centers to "supplement analyses and policy deliberations with the Department of Defense" in 1983, the professors would have nothing to do with it. MESA's ethics committee tried to discredit the program and dissuade members from participating. The organization eventually urged "university-based international studies programs to refrain from responding to requests for research contract proposals" and asked its members "to reflect carefully upon their responsibilities to the academic profession prior to seeking or accepting funding." (At the same time, MESA seemed to have no problem with programs that took money from Arab governments.)

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The field of Middle Eastern studies, when it chooses to help at all, seems to provide nothing but bad advice.

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There have even been attempts to cultivate irrelevance. In 1985, Georgetown University's Judith Tucker surveyed scholarship in Middle Eastern studies and was glad to report it displayed "less of the imprint of stringent policy demands" than it had in the past. She only regretted it was "not entirely free of the test of relevance to policy concerns." This appears not to have changed, judging from the program for MESA's upcoming annual convention on November 17–20 in San Francisco. There are plenty of panels on trendy feminist topics—titles include "Empowering Muslim Women" and "Gender and Sexual Identity in Modern Arabic Literature"—but nothing on terrorism or the Taliban except a hastily organized "special session" that will discuss September 11 for two hours. MESA's formal statement on the terrorist strikes does not even employ the word "terrorism," presumably because this is a loaded term in its circles. Instead, it speaks of "condolences to all those personally affected by the tragedy"—as if this were something less than a national catastrophe.

"Middle Eastern studies probably should have taken terrorism more seriously," admits MESA president R. Stephen Humphreys. But he's still defensive: "Our field was blindsided by September 11, but so was the FBI, CIA, and everybody else who's supposed to know about this stuff." Of course, the FBI and CIA, whatever their lapses, have prevented an unknowable number of terrorist acts against Americans. And as far as the policy community goes, there really were a few Cassandras in our midst—experts who warned us about the consequences of ignoring terrorism but who were themselves ignored. They just didn't hail from the academic field of Middle Eastern studies, which, when it chooses to help at all, seems to provide nothing but bad advice. Unfortunately, there's no reason to think this will cease. As Martin Kramer notes, "There is no professional cost for substantive error in interpreting the actual Middle East. Indeed, leaders of the field do it all the time without any negative consequences."

They may even try to take advantage of the current crisis, exploiting it as a Sputnik-like catalyst for increased public funding of Middle Eastern studies. It would be a big mistake to let them do this: The U.S. clearly needs to improve its understanding of the Middle East, starting with the basic chore of bringing on more national-security personnel who can speak Arabic. We can accomplish this most readily by improving education in the traditional disciplines.

It won't be long before the professors gripe that they deserve more attention; they're frankly envious of the think-tank specialists who have come to replace them as advisers to the government. Not long after the Gulf War, MESA's then-president Rashid Khalidi—who had predicted a disaster for the U.S. in the region—sent a letter to members complaining that "the consensus of experts in the Middle East field on a given matter is ignored by leaders and governments in framing their policies."

Praise be for that. **NR**

■ AT WAR ■

Local Heroes

Firefighters, cops, and the beauty of small government

MARK STEYN

WE'RE all into government now. Not just Sen. Rodham Clinton—on September 11, "we saw government in action"—but also Vice President Cheney—"One of the things that's changed so much since September 11th is the extent to which people do trust the government—big shift—and value it, and have high expectations for what we can do."

If that's true, it's hard to see why. But the Clinton-Cheney line is now received wisdom. There was even a hint of gloating in the way Albert Hunt, in the *Wall Street Journal*, noted that the heroes of September 11—firemen, cops, rescue workers—were all government employees. That's correct, as far as it goes. But by which government were they employed? What worked on September 11 was municipal and state government. What failed—big time, as the vice president might say—was federal government, all the hotshot money-no-object sweeping-powers fancypants acronyms: FBI, CIA, INS, FAA.

Indeed, if Hill and Al are determined to goad us small-government nuts into beastly partisanship, one could argue that September 11 vindicates perfectly the decentralized, federalist, conservative view of the world. We all love firemen. On the Fourth of July, in small towns across America, the fire department leads off the parade, as it should. Proponents of small government don't want to sell off the fire trucks, they want to get rid of all the stuff that distracts from the fire department. The debate

Mr. Steyn is senior North American columnist for Britain's Telegraph Group.

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over government is between folks who want a fire chief and those who want a fire chief plus a transgendered cultural-outreach officer. Fellows like Edgar Rosenblum of New Haven's Long Wharf Theatre: "The fire department is *not* more important than art," he said at some arts gabfest a few years back. "If you will save people, what will you save them for?" Big government wants it all: a fireman to bring you out of the blazing skyscraper and then deposit you in front of the homoerotic performance artist waiting in the town square.

Incidentally, in many parts of the country, even the emergency services exemplify the American ideal of an engaged citizenry: The fire departments and rescue squads are volunteer, and the police officers are part-timers recruited from among willing residents. I'm not suggesting this would work in New York—only that both the big town and Nowheresville exemplify the same principle: that remote government is bad government. And the remoter it gets, the worse it gets. It was somehow inevitable that, even as the Left was demanding that any response to September 11 should be done through Kofi Annan and international law and the other putative organs of "world government," it emerged that the U.N. had given money to one of Osama bin Laden's front organizations. Not because they meant to give millions to terrorists, but because the likelihood of that happening increases the farther away government gets from the volunteer-fire-department level.

Big government failed all over the world in the run-up to September 11: The suicide bombers and their support networks lived openly in the U.S., Canada, Britain, and Western Europe, crossing and re-crossing borders, flying back and forth, waved through each and every time despite invalid visas, outstanding warrants, and behavior so suspicious they might as well have had "TERRORIST" blaring in neon from their foreheads. But let's be as generous as the Bush administration apparently is. Let's wipe the slate and judge these agencies strictly by what they've done since 9/11: The FBI is in some snotty turf war with the NYPD. At the FAA, director Jane Garvey is refusing to support the pilots' demand to be allowed to

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carry guns but does support driving what's left of commercial air travel further into the ground by forcing passengers to arrive two hours beforehand so their nail files and tweezers can be confiscated. And at the INS their first reaction to September 11 was to write to Deena Gilbey.

Who's Deena Gilbey? She's one of several hundred foreigners widowed by the events of 9/11. Her husband Paul was a trader with Euro Bank who worked on the 84th floor of the World Trade Center. Mr. Gilbey was British and had been admitted to the U.S. on a long-term work visa that allowed his family to live here but not to work. The Gilbeys bought a house in Chatham Township, N.J., and had two children, born here and thus U.S. citizens. All perfectly legal and valid. A few days after September 11, Mrs. Gilbey received a form letter from the INS informing her that, upon her husband's death, his visa had expired and with it her right to remain in the country. She was now, they informed her, an illegal alien.

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The INS failed to get Mohamed Atta, but they did get Deena Gilbey. Congratulations, guys.

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Well, as on September 11, the local guys came through. The Chatham police chief was outraged and took up her case; eventually it came to the attention of the president and, in late October, he signed special legislation for the hundreds in Mrs. Gilbey's position. But what the big-government boosters need to address is the peculiar mentality of a swollen bureaucracy whose first priority on the morning of September 12 is to traumatize further the law-abiding widows and children: That's an "intelligence failure" even more profound than the CIA's. The INS blithely admitted Mohamed Atta to the country with a visa invalid for the purpose of his stay. Given that he went on to murder Mrs. Gilbey's husband, the agency's harassment is at the very least in the most appalling taste.

But big government will do that to you. I'm Canadian and I have a romantic fondness for the famous motto of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the one about the Mounties always getting their man. But the bigger you make the government, the more you entrust to it, the more powers you give it to nose around the citizenry's bank accounts, and phone calls, and e-mails, the more you'll enfeeble it with the siren song of the soft target. The Mounties will no longer get their man, they'll get *you* instead. Frankly, it's a lot easier. And so the INS failed to get Mohamed Atta, but they did get Deena Gilbey. Congratulations, guys.

That's why Dick Cheney's "big shift" is in the wrong direction. What should have died on September 11 is the liberal myth that you can regulate the world to your will. The perfect symbol of this delusion is the airline cabin, the most advanced model of the modern social-democratic state, the sky-high version of trends that, on the ground, progress more slowly. Massachusetts and California can only aspire to cloud-cuckoo-land, but up there where the air is rarefied a federal regulatory authority can bring Utopia into being at the stroke of a bureaucrat's pen. The commercial airliner is an Al Gore dream. There is no smoking. There is 100 percent gun control. You are obliged by law to do everything the cabin crew tells you to do, and if you don't there'll be officers waiting to arrest you when the plane lands. The justification for all this was the usual one—that in return for surrendering individual liberties, we'll all be collectively better off. On September 11, the FAA failed spectacularly to honor their end of the bargain—as the terrorists knew they would.

And how's the FAA reacting? With more of the same kind of trivial, obtrusive, useless regulations that give you the comforting illusion that if they're regulating you, they must be regulating all the bad guys as well. We don't need big government, we need lean government—government that's stripped of its distractions and forced to concentrate on the essentials. If Hillary & Co. want to argue for big government, conservatives could at least make the case for what's really needed: grown-up government. **NR**

■ **POLITICS** ■

The Jersey Crusader

Bret Schundler, against the odds

RAMESH PONNURU

Ewing Township, N.J.

IT'S half an hour before the penultimate debate in the race for governor of New Jersey, and IUPAT—that's the union of "painters, tapers, glaziers, and allied trades"—is out in force. On the green in front of the auditorium where the debate will be held, at least two-thirds of Democrat Jim McGreevey's supporters are wearing IUPAT T-shirts. All of them are in a boisterous mood. They've had a few beers, and their guy is up ten points in the polls. They're supposed to stay on one side of the green, but they cross over and push the outnumbered Republicans to the edge. The Democrats are not without a sense of humor: "Union goons! Union goons!" they chant by way of self-description. And then: "Schundler sucks! Schundler sucks!" The Republicans try to chant, "Go, Bret, go!" But they're drowned out.

Being outnumbered and drowned out is something Bret Schundler is getting used to. As the mayor of Jersey City, one of the state's many urban blight spots, Schundler was a hero to conservatives. He was the man who was doing what Jack Kemp had always talked about: bringing free-market reform, and hope, to the dark-skinned poor. Under his leadership, the city saw ten times as much job growth as the rest of the state's cities combined. Crime went down, and educational achievement went up. But Schundler's bid for governor faces long odds. He has been too reformist for some Republican officials. He's running in a state that is heavily unionized, dependent on state government, and liberal on social issues. Since September 11, he's had an additional problem: His campaign message has been drowned out by the news.

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"For the last two months, our opponent hasn't been McGreevey. We've been running against hijackers and anthrax," says a frustrated Schundler aide. It's hard to get the attention of New Jersey voters at the best of times. Most of the media are based outside the state, in New York and Philadelphia, and television advertising is expensive. Swing voters are notoriously late to decide on candidates. That tendency is going to be more pronounced than ever this fall. (It doesn't help that the Yankees are in the World Series.)

For an underdog to turn around a campaign under these circumstances requires that he stick day and night to a simple, popular message. Schundler is incapable of this discipline. He overflows with ideas about public policy, all of which he is sure you would support if he could patiently explain them to you. He makes gaffes not because he is a table-pounding ideologue (he isn't), but because he doesn't always consider the effect his words will have. In September, for example, he said that it was "wonderful" that the recession would force New Jersey's government to make choices.

Schundler's advisers have given him a simple mission for his October 25 debate: Say that he plans to cut taxes and that McGreevey will raise them. At the very start of the debate, McGreevey shows his vulnerability on the subject. Having spent months saying it would be "irresponsible" to join Schundler in pledging not to raise taxes if elected, McGreevey says he won't raise taxes. Later in the debate, he calls former governor Jim Florio's tax increase of 1990—an unpopular move that cost Florio his reelection, but one that McGreevey has defended for more than a decade—a "mistake." Schundler has an opportunity to call McGreevey on his flip-flop and question his sincerity.

He muffs it. Even though Schundler's campaign has issued a press release predicting that McGreevey would make a no-tax-hike pledge, Schundler appears not to notice when it happens. He gets bogged down talking about guns.

Schundler further astonishes his advisers by using the debate to unveil an idea he has not discussed with them: The government, he says, should rush cowpox vaccine into production in case terrorists spread smallpox. (Cowpox vaccine, he says, can be produced faster than smallpox vaccine and so should be made available while the latter is developed.) This may be a good idea, but Schundler is not going to win the election on it. Yet he opens his closing statement by returning to cowpox. He brings it up again at a meeting with the editorial board of the *Press of Atlantic City* the next day.

A consultant to Schundler sums up what makes him so refreshing, and maddening, to work for: "This is a guy who does not take coaching. He knows what he wants to say and how he wants to say it." His aims are noble and sincere. Schundler tells the editorial board, "I am so tired of hearing that poor children can't learn. We are shortchanging these kids. There is such a lack of idealism in this country, and it's because we've been told that we can't do things."

■

'This is a guy who does not take coaching. He knows what he wants to say and how he wants to say it.'

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There's a shortage of idealism in the New Jersey Republican party, too, one Schundler has tried to correct. When President Bush picked Gov. Christine Todd Whitman to run the EPA, Donald DiFrancesco became acting governor. Schundler forced DiFrancesco out of the primary for governor by raising questions about his ethics. The party establishment retaliated by changing the primary rules so that ex-congressman Bob Franks could get in. Schundler beat him, too. But the primary left the party divided—DiFrancesco still hasn't endorsed Schundler as of late October—and short of funds. Raising funds post-9/11 has been difficult.

The Democrats, having had no such bruising primary, have plenty of money. The man on whom they are spending it, Jim McGreevey, is an antimatter version of Schundler. He never departs from script—and his scripts, it has been reported, even tell him which emotion to register at which time. McGreevey is the mayor of Woodbridge ("like being mayor of Mayberry," scoffs Schundler). A creature of the Democratic machine, he has no ideas of his own about either public policy or campaign tactics. His major tactic has been to depict Schundler as "extreme" on guns, abortion, and school vouchers.

What McGreevey's campaign lacks in imagination, it has made up in dishonesty. One of McGreevey's main charges against Schundler is that he favors letting people carry concealed weapons. This policy is not self-evidently crazy, as McGreevey treats it, but the fact is that Schundler has never endorsed it. On education, McGreevey resorts to caricature. Schundler wants to give parents tax credits for educational expenses, whether the expenses are for private-school tuitions or school supplies. In McGreevey's rhetoric, this policy amounts to "Mr. Schundler's plan to draw money away from public schools." Also: an "untested reckless scheme" and an "untested system that nobody believes can work."

The good news for Schundler is that these attacks aren't closing the sale for McGreevey. Alluding to the fact that McGreevey first ran for governor in 1997, a Schundler adviser says, "He's been running for five years and he can't crack 50 [percent in the polls]." Schundler's call to eliminate tolls on the Garden State Parkway is popular. The tax issue, too, appears to be working for Schundler: Why else would McGreevey be backtracking? Two of Schundler's supporters—President Bush and Rudolph Giuliani—are popular in New Jersey now and could lend him a hand. Those late-deciding voters could wait until the morning of Tuesday, November 6, to pick Schundler.

If Schundler wins, he will be a conservative hero again: the man who proved it was possible for a non-squish Republican to win in the Northeast. If he loses, there's always next time. A New Jersey pol's first statewide race is more often a chance to become better known than to win. Jim Florio and Christine Todd Whitman both lost at first. But Schundler has beaten expectations before. He wasn't expected to win the race for mayor, or the primary this spring. Vincent Cannato, a former top aide to Schundler, acknowledges that his old boss has an uphill climb. But he cautions not to "count Bret out on anything." **NR**

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Porn, Pervasive Presence

The creepy wallpaper of our daily lives

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

THE subject is pornography and Pervasive Presence. That last is a legal term meaning—it's everywhere. Is it really everywhere? In February I picked up the current *Esquire*. The issue began with letters-to-the-editor. Readers gave their opinions of *Esquire*'s year-end issue marking the end of President Clinton's administration. That issue had come in with a cover photo of Mr. Clinton, seated, smiling defiantly into the camera, hands resting on widely separated knees, the picture snapped at crotch level. Leer time.

The editors introduced a running feature called "Man at His Best." Its theme—*What shall we do? What shall we think about?*—was given by the editors for serial weeks in the month of February. For Valentine's Day (Week Two), ". . . we recommend the Valentine's Day Sex Tour at the San Francisco Zoo. Learn that chimps make it with their sisters. Marvel that a male lion can copulate up to 50 times a day." For Week Four, there is a dark observation: "Observe Ash Wednesday on February 28th, if that's your thing." Quickly followed by, "Also [i.e., something else to look for in February's Week Four]: Nicole Kidman is expected to bare butt yet again in Miramax's *Birthday Girl*."

The same page gives us, on column right, insights on recent automobile models. The commentary begins with a warning: "Unfortunately, getting some backseat action has gone the way of the drive-in. But we miss the backseat. We miss the contortions and the 'Oh, is that your elbow?' and how the smell of high-test can fire our passions."

A second feature of the "Man at His Best" section concerns Food & Drink. We turn to wine. "Of course it has to be rose champagne, because the bubbles, the blush of color—do I really need to explain this further? Try one of these and she'll be giddy enough to say yes even if she harbours doubts."

We turn then to a section labeled "Read Her Mind." "Getting your desired one to see the sun rise from your corner of the world is the hard part." (Interesting question: *Why* hard? Why should she be reluctant?) We are given "some helpful hints." They include the Canine Code. "We know you consider your dog to be an extension of your heart, and we aim to please. But when it's time to get naked, *Fido goes or we do*." *Esquire* knows when one has to get down to business.

More advice. "What sort of flowers should I buy for my lady friend?" Flowers "will soon droop and die, but love songs live beyond the moon and stars. And more: They're sure to get you laid." Other considerations are deftly dealt with. "What's the deal with my morning erections?" and, How to deal with the prostitute?—"You can expect to arrange the act before it's performed, so please stay within the limits set. If you said you want a blow job, don't try to stick it in her ass. This ought to go without saying." But nothing goes without saying in the contemporary *Esquire*.

We are not nearly through—the groundwork for our inquiry into Pervasive Presence needs to be solid. We come upon *Esquire*'s feature section: "Take This Job and . . . Insert Gently." It recounts the empirical responsibilities of an employee of a sex-toys outfit, a married 26-year-old woman who, on this night out, is experimenting with a pair of thong panties to which a brand new apparatus is attached. An explanation: "Inside this plastic butterfly is a tiny electric motor and a receiver. The receiver is activated by depressing the button on the small plastic box in [her husband's] pocket which, it turns out, is a wireless remote control with a range of twenty-five feet. Upon such activation, the motor causes the butterfly to vibrate. It's not so quiet that it would be inaudible in a board meeting, most probably, but it's more than quiet enough to be employed overtly in a bar. Or in a movie theater. Or at the opera. Certainly during the loud parts."

On to a second main feature, "One Woman, Five Senses," described as an extended exploration of women's five operative senses and leading to a third feature called "46 Women Who Were Not My Wife." Details? "I have cheated on my wife with thirty-two women I can name (perhaps even correctly) and another dozen or so who flash into recall only as situations . . ." A final long feature is of an elderly adult-movie maker. A picture of one of the stars has a caption that tells the story. "The pornographication of the American girl has proceeded at such a pace that the fact of Gregory Dark directing a Britney Spears video seems not so much anomalous as inevitable." Like the modern *Esquire*.

A STEEP DEGENERATION

The pornographication of the American girl! *Esquire*'s language. About itself? Don't answer that, but think back to the *Esquire* of days gone by. Ernest Hemingway published

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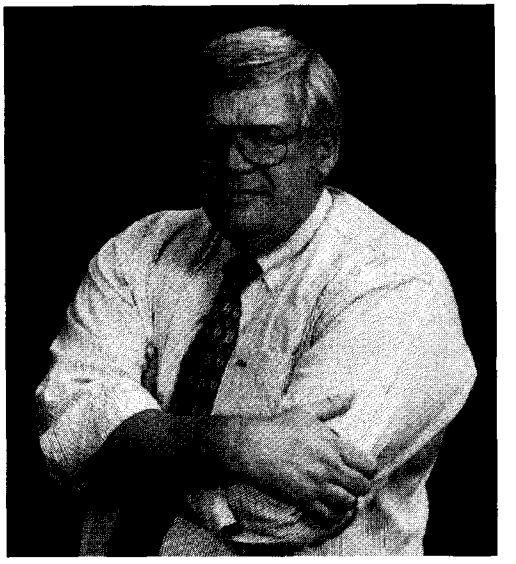
"The illegal drug trade is the financial engine that fuels many terrorist organizations around the world, including Osama Bin Laden."



House Speaker Dennis Hastert[1]

- The United Nations reports an illegal drug trade worth $400 Billion a year[2] — $100 Billion more than our Department of Defense budget.
- Drug trade is big business: Illegal Drugs are 8% of all international trade while Textiles are 7.5% and Motor Vehicles are 5.3%.[3]

We do not purport a direct link with the tragedies of 9/11. But as part of the battle to defeat terrorism and strengthen our society, ask yourself:

- Is the funding of terrorism another unintended consequence of drug prohibition?
- Could a regulated and controlled model for soft drugs similar to our approach with alcohol and for hard drugs similar to prescription drugs stop the flow of illegal drug profits?
- In so many ways, does the War on Drugs cause far more harm than good, both here and abroad?

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Sources:

1: Associated Press, "Hastert Forms Task Force on Drugs," September 21, 2001.
2: United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, "Economic and Social Consequences of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking" (New York, NY: UN Drug Control Program, 1998), p. 3.
3: United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, "Economic and Social Consequences of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking" (New York, NY: UN Drug Control Program, 1998), p. 3.

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"The Snows of Kilimanjaro" in *Esquire*. Tom Wolfe, in a renowned essay, singled out *Esquire* as the primary home of inventive literary journalism in his generation. It published 5,000-word pieces by Norman Mailer and Garry Wills (and this author). It was the monthly magazine of Dwight Macdonald, movie critic, and Malcolm Muggeridge, book critic. Is the *Esquire* given over to erotomania unique? Of course not, but it isn't just one more girlie magazine. It is a sign of the times, the day of pervasive presence. Eros is crowding at us on all sides, as the erotic and the pornographic merge.

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I stopped by at the local Abercrombie & Fitch for sailing wear. The company has been renowned from time immemorial for its wholesome regard for the outdoor life.

■

I stopped by at the local Abercrombie & Fitch for sailing wear. I waited, at the counter, for my package and looked down on the A&F Summer Catalogue. You could see the handsome young man on the cover, but the catalogue itself was bound in cellophane. My eyes turned to the card alongside. "To subscribe: Fill out this card and head to the nearest A&F store with a valid photo ID." *With a valid photo ID?* I thought that odd and asked the young man behind the counter, who was perhaps 19 years old, why IDs were required for purchasers of an Abercrombie & Fitch catalogue. He said, "Well, uh, it's kind of porny inside."

Abercrombie & Fitch has been from time immemorial a sportswear store renowned for its wholesome regard for the outdoor life. I smile still at the story recorded in *The New Yorker* generations ago. It was of a gardener in Long Island who yearned to buy a genuine A&F barometer and finally saved up the money to do so. He brought the beautiful thing back from Manhattan to his little house on the south shore, tapped it a few times impatiently, and stormed back to Manhattan to complain to the salesman that it was defective, its needle stuck at the mark "Hurricane." Abercrombie returned his money and the plaintiff returned to Islip to find that his house had been blown away.

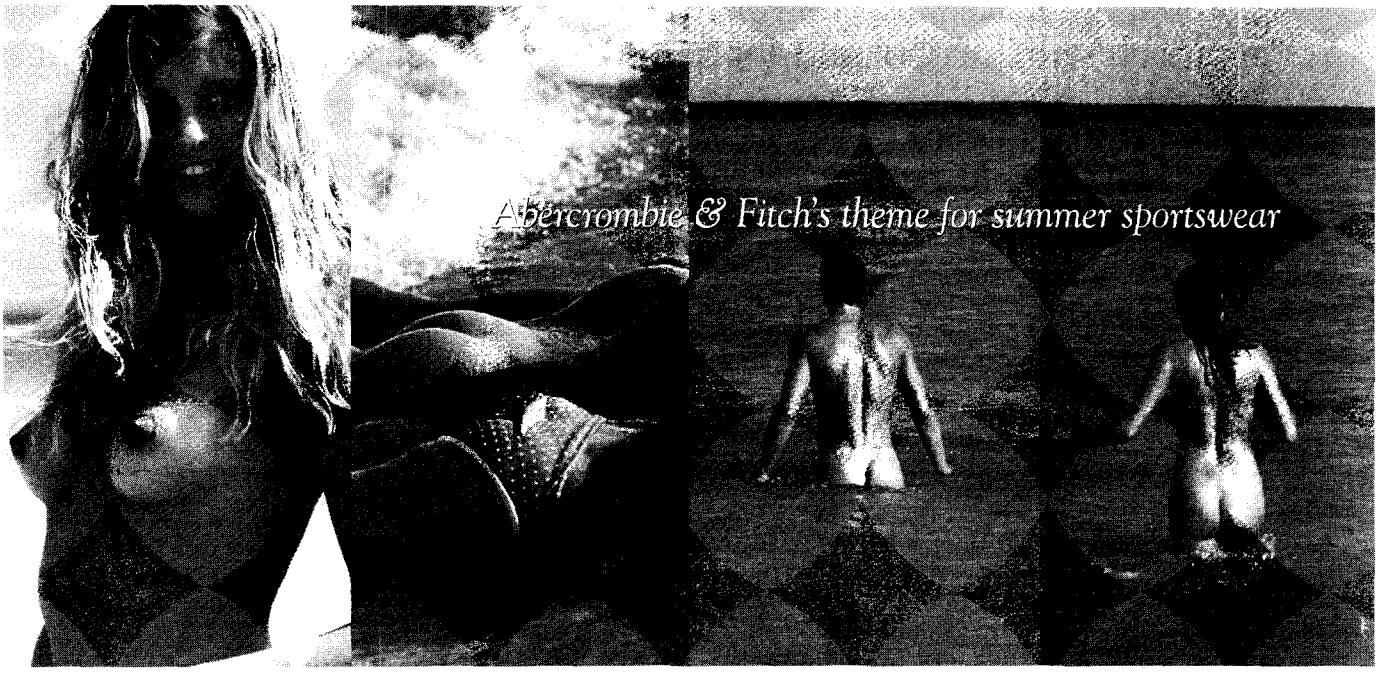
Abercrombie's barometric needle had pointed resolutely at the impending hurricane of 1938, and presumably the company's current managers are confident that its current clothes line is also pointed surely, though the summer A&F catalogue seems to be suggesting that young men and women are better off wearing no clothes at all.

It is introduced by a 150-word essay under the title, "The Pleasure Principle." A definition ensues: "In psychoanalysis, the tendency or drive to achieve pleasure and avoid pain is the chief motivating force in behavior." And then an amplification: "Summer being our favorite time of the year and all, we've worked extra hard to bring you our best issue yet by letting the pleasure principle be our guide through the hottest months."

The lead page gives us a jaunty blonde clutching her hair, wet from the ocean she has just emerged from. If she is wearing anything, it would be below her pelvic joint. Above it, which is all the viewer can see, there are no clothes.

Next, a two-page spread of above-the-navel photos, six young men and one girl. One does spot a shoulder strap on the girl that may be a part of a bathing suit, subterranean and not reached by the camera. But lo, she does wear a watch, sheltering the wrist's nudity. The men wear nothing. A few pages on, a boy wears tennis shoes (unlaced) and a towel over his head. On his knee a camera rests. His shorts are given perspective by the young man's erection.

Whereas the young man a few pages on is entirely naked, leaning slightly over one knee. Across the page are worshipful photos of his windblown face in six differing expo-



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sures. . . . On to another young man entirely naked, one knee (the windward knee) held up. He is reposing on the deck of a sailboat, his back resting on an unfurled mainsail. The very next page gives us a girl wearing a T-shirt on which one can actually make out the name of our hosts: "Abercrombie" is discernible, and then something on the order of "Open Beauty Pageant." That shirt tapers off at the lady's waist. Below the waist there is nothing at all, except, of course, her naked body. A few pages later the young man is naked again on the boat, but wearing a drenched jacket which reaches only as far as his waist. A few pages later we have five beautiful blondes in full summer wear, draped about a Byronic young man evidently lost in the poetry of his reflections, a loose towel over his crotch.

There was never a pitch more nakedly designed than Abercrombie's to stimulate erotic appetites. The last part of the catalogue actually depicts clothes of one kind or another, but the reader, getting that far, is hotly indignant: What are all those shirts and shorts and pants doing, interrupting my view of the naked kids! I mean, I showed you my ID, didn't I?

THE NUMBER-ONE SPORT

Neither of us (I am co-opting the reader) is suffering simply from being the last guy in town to get the word. Erotomania is *the* phenomenon. The ubiquity of merchandised sex is hinted at by such displays as *Esquire*'s and Abercrombie's, which are merely byways to full-blown porn.

Frank Rich did a thorough piece, in May 2001, for *The New York Times Magazine*, nicely titled, "Naked Capitalists: There's No Business Like Porn Business." The raw figures he assembled astonish. We learn that $4 billion a year is spent on video pornography, that this sum of money is greater than what is spent on major league baseball; indeed that pornography is a bigger business than professional football or basketball. That 700 million rentals of porn movies occur every year, and that people pay more money for pornography in America than they do for movies. Perhaps we should say, more carefully, than for "non-adult" movies. Every year, 400 regular movies are made. The porn people make 11,000.

There used to be laws—not of the kind that would interfere with *Esquire* or Abercrombie, but laws that said: That product is obscene; and you can't peddle it in *our* marketplace. (There still *are* such laws, as Jay Nordlinger emphasizes in the following article; it is largely a question of attention and enforcement.)

In 1965, crusading lawyer Charles Rembar set out to defend *Fanny Hill*, a volume no less pornographic for having achieved classical status. Rembar persuaded a jury that *Fanny Hill* was not obscene because it had other than merely prurient dimensions. What happened rather quickly on the heels of that decision, and another that cleared the way to sell *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, was a wholesale adoption by the intelligentsia, and a contingent adoption by the courts, of the slippery-slope catechism. That line of reasoning holds, in effect, that if you forbid *Deep Throat* to be shown at the local movie house, the next thing you know you will be forbidding *Ulysses* at the local bookstore.

Charles Rembar celebrated his victory in a book strikingly titled, *The End of Obscenity*. Published in 1968, it gave us the aphorism that pornography is "in the groin of the beholder." That definition is provocative and amusing; but no doubt unintentionally, it is also telling us that, yes, there *is* such a thing as pornography.

Charles Rembar was arguing that because obscenity is indefinable, it is impossible to legislate against it. That fatalism isn't held only by First Amendment fundamentalists. James Jackson Kilpatrick, a thoughtful and influential conservative writer and essayist, some time ago publicly gave up on the challenge of regulating traffic in obscenity. His reasoning might be assailed as circular (*Because I can't define obscenity, nobody can*) but it is not unreasonable. If *you* can't define it, how can you expect the legislature to succeed?

The non-interventionists had a second challenge. They

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were prepared to insist on the nescient definitional point (*How can we tell it's obscenity?*), but it was more difficult to overcome the democratic point, which held that the local community should decide the question.

Congress and the Supreme Court came up with a pragmatic devolution of authority. So obscenity can't be defined, does that mean it does not exist? The combatants crowded around the latest aphorism, which was Justice Potter Stewart's. He opined that whatever the difficulties in definition, "I know it when I see it." The statement reassured the fundamentalists by suggesting that porn was in the eye of the beholder; but that didn't make it invisible.

The Court pursued a demographic cultural line. There are different *standards* by which erotic/pornographic material is judged. The book or movie an urbane New Yorker might read or view without raising an eyebrow, in other jurisdictions might be deemed obscene and offensive. The landmark ruling (*Miller* v. *California*, 1973) held that material is obscene when 1) an average person, applying contemporary community standards, finds that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interest; when 2) the work depicts in a patently offensive way sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable state law; and when 3) the work in question lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

■

'I don't even like Picasso!' the poor, emasculated juror confessed. Who was *he* to argue about the work of the artist called Mapplethorpe?

■

The federal prosecutor, seeking to comply with the *Miller* decision, elected in 1976 to prosecute *Deep Throat* in Memphis, banking on a Sunbelt jury's granitic determination to declare obscenity obscene. *Deep Throat*, then, *was* judged obscene, but appeals went on for so long that the film, far from suffering censorship, became something of a risqué cause. The movie continued full-bodied on the screen, not only in Memphis, where it played for months, but in venturesome movie theaters everywhere. Everybody wanted to know exactly what it was all about. A body of editors of the *New York Times* trooped to it one afternoon as something of a delegation, deferring to judicial equivocation by paying their own way, instead of charging their tickets to the *Times* as a professional expense.

But how to judge a work obscene under the law if it has extra-prurient value?

I remember the showcase event. A juror in Cincinnati was questioned in 1990 by a *New York Times* reporter curious about the Not Guilty verdict handed down the day before, exonerating the Cincinnati Museum of violating state obscenity laws. The museum had exhibited photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe.

How did you reach that not-guilty conclusion, the reporter asked the juror?

Well you see, he explained, it isn't that we didn't think the Mapplethorpe exhibit really *was* obscene. There is no question about that, it certainly was obscene. *But there was the other question* . . .

What kept the jury from a guilty verdict, it transpired, was the expert witness who came in to testify that there was redeeming value in the photographs. "I don't even like Picasso!" the poor, emasculated juror confessed. Who was *he* to argue about the work of the artist called Mapplethorpe, never mind the photo of a male rectum with the bullwhip sticking out.

The survival of *Deep Throat* had meanwhile pretty much established that you didn't really need artistic cover, of the kind that was adduced by the defense of Mapplethorpe in Cincinnati. If you lost on the artistic-value front, you could winnow your way back into the protection of the First Amendment from the deepest imaginable throat. First Amendment aggrandizement, and the raindrop pressure of commerce, had anachronized the censors. With the result that there is porn—everywhere.

Well not quite *everywhere*, and this leads to cable TV.

IN THE MORNING, IN THE EVENING . . .

Playboy-TV wanted badly to stretch its legs a few years ago, which meant getting permission from the FCC to broadcast 24 hours per day.

The FCC's original refusal had turned on the so-called signal bleed, under the authority of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Technological cable-TV expansion had had the effect of channel crowding, permitting sex-talk or sex images to leak into adjacent channels. To guard against this, *Playboy* had been ordered to remain silent until 10 P.M., when image frontiers were easier to govern and when such leakage as did occur came in at adult hours.

The plaintiffs argued that this deprivation imposed burdens that ran into their First Amendment rights. *Broadcast* television is properly governed by FCC rules, the fundamentalists conceded, but *cable* television should be left alone unless the case can be made that it is "a pervasive presence," i.e., for all intents and purposes, impossible to exclude from view. The Playboy Channel, its sponsor argued, comes in only on schedules especially invited into the house. That being so, any attempt to block its entry should be done only after "strict scrutiny" constitutional pleading, keeping in mind that First Amendment rights superordinate regulatory laws, which are legitimately invoked only on broadcast material that comes into the room like sunshine, and is therefore pervasively present.

The plaintiffs won. They persuaded the tribunal that cable television was *not* omnipresent, not a pervasive presence. The new ruling meant that those who bring in cable and subscribe to a menu that includes the Playboy Channel should be free to get porn round the clock. If twelve-year-olds are caught looking in curiously at gangbangs at eight in the morning, why . . . spank them.

It's certainly true that subscribing to a schedule that includes Playboy is a volitional act, even as renting a porn movie requires a foray of sorts. For one thing, to get a porno, unless you are ordering by mail, you actually have to leave

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the house; step out from the neighborhood, so to speak, to bring in that porn. And then Blockbuster, the corner store of video TV, doesn't even carry Adult Fare. Therefore, a Playboy Channel customer, far from posing as an innocent bystander victimized by porn's juggernaut, is better likened to the man or woman free to buy a ticket to see *Deep Throat*.

While the question of cable TV as a pervasive presence was being considered, along came the Internet. We are advised (though I stare at the figure with obdurate skepticism) that the Internet has 70,000 porn outlets. Anybody who wishes, and learns how to twiddle the dials, can now drink deep of porn at home or, as contrived, in leisure moments in the office. To be sure, you are supposed to be older than 18, which requires you to feign to be older than 18.

But even the Internet, though there are about 130 million users in this country, is one step removed from what one is exposed to in normal, pedestrian life. Television, on the other hand, is truly universal. By relaxing its grip on pre–10 P.M. cable porn, the FCC has moved in the direction of porn as a pervasive presence. Still, Playboy argued, the individual subscriber, to satisfy himself, needs to seek Playboy out, so that it remains one stage removed from, say, the radio left idly on in the house or garage.

Yes . . . and no. It is reasonably argued that porn on TV is a pervasive presence. And then to ask, Is there still an ethical question kicking about? If something is wrong, viz., distributing materials assembled with only the purpose in mind to gratify prurient interests, what leverage is left to questions of right and wrong? Questions of ethics? What sanctions, if any, do objectors have who claim concern for community standards?

The issue of *Esquire* cited above has that wonderfully patronizing line for those of its readers casting about for something to do during the fourth week of the month. "Observe Ash Wednesday on February 28th, if that's your thing." Your thing. Your *thing*! Your fetish. Christianity.

Christianity isn't the only ethical system spawned by religious beliefs that opines on sexual commerce. Judaism, of course, and Islam have sexual codes. The questioner keeps asking, What are the wells from which these strictures against sexual exhibitionism flow? Primarily they are deposits of religious creeds and maxims. But they have a life of their own, reiteratedly stressed in non-religious chambers. The New York Society for Ethical Culture posts its credenda on a single page: "*We Believe* . . . that ethics is the central factor in human relationships." That "all individuals are validated and strengthened through our interconnectedness with others." But why should others, unburdened by religious doctrine, be affected by mores that were created by religion, or that derive from them? Are those who make the case for the revival of public codes on pornography left with an obligation to come up with empirical secular justification for doing so? Do we need bastard children and AIDS and syphilis to make the case for condoms or for sexual restraint?

Ethical codes exist independent of material consequences, notably the commandment to charity. But a search for utilitarian means of making the case for sexual restraint is rewarding. It takes us to the most obvious historical case study, if concededly the most facile, which is the Lewinsky episode in President Clinton's career.

Never mind what Clinton did. Focus only on the factor of shame.

During his, and the republic's, ordeal, it was endlessly reiterated that what he did was irrelevant to his tenure as president.

Perhaps. But why was it necessary to make this point endlessly? Because contrary judgments were endlessly arrived at; indeed, President Clinton was impeached. To uphold publicly *his* rights to private sexual conduct necessarily gave rise to public questions about normative sexual conduct. The pornographic code holds that consensual exchanges of whatever nature are, at the very least, interesting to read about, and abstractly innocent. But to aver that what-he-did-in-the-bedroom was irrelevant to his tenure as president is different from saying that what he did "in private life" should be immune from ethical criticism. Not justifying impeachment is different from not meriting disapproval.

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Christianity isn't the only ethical system spawned by religious beliefs that opines on sexual commerce.

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From which we deduce that there survives, buffeted and defensive, an extant code of sexual behavior that, while countenancing pornography, disapproves of it and is properly alert to the challenge, *What to do about it?*

Acknowledging collective concern takes you beyond the counsel to self-abnegation. We have a code of ethics that tells us that indeed Clinton ought not to have done what he did, and the rebuke is made at different levels of sternness, reflecting the ardor with which one holds to standards of behavior. The failure to live unerringly by the marital code, to single out that aspect of Clinton's conduct, is so commonplace as to escape reprimand in positive law except when the betrayed partner decides to enter a claim in a divorce court. But that which isn't illegal isn't therefore blameless, as a rudimentary esteem for honor reminds us. Carefree commerce in pornography is a consequence of permissive interpretations of the Constitution, but the courts' rulings do not repeal a sense of what is and isn't proper. Nobody of public consequence comes to mind who flatly dismisses the marital ideal and appropriate sexual behavior as anachronized, on the order of laws against witchcraft or heresy, or even laws against sodomy. These are not only ignored, they are disowned as errant moral judgments of history; which is not likely to happen on the question of the marital contract.

In the *United States* v. *Clinton*, A.D. 1999, ethical forces, demoralized by partisanship, distracted by constitutional scruple, and weakened by moral irresolution, stopped short of exacting the capital penalty of removal from office. But the code of conduct was not so laggard as to fail to exact

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some form of deference: Bill Clinton *apologized* for his conduct.

AGAINST COMPLACENCY

It has not been established that viewing a movie about wanton sexual behavior prompts wanton sexual behavior, though common sense comes into play. What are the progenitors of current sexual behavior? Prohibiting advertisements for cigarette smoking is an ongoing objective of those who assume there is a nexus between the display of a product and commerce done in that product. Nobody argues the contrary in respect of liquor. If cigarette ads sell cigarettes, why doesn't *Esquire* sell sex?

It is established by common sense that stimulants stimulate. What are the defensible weapons against beady-eyed sexual commerce? If conduct of a certain kind is wrong, how does one argue that point? Traditionally one asks for more merely than soliloquies by the tablet keepers, eulogizing community codes. In the presidential campaign of 1996, Candidate Robert Dole chastised Hollywood and, in the interpretation of some, even threatened it.

Threatened it with what? Public strictures?

A movement should begin, however modestly. (For possibilities, see Mr. Nordlinger's article.) And a key to it is the concept of the pervasive presence. Twenty-five years ago, Malcolm Muggeridge commented on the American scene in *The New York Review of Books*. "Never, it is safe to say, in the history of the world, has a country been as sex-ridden as America is today. The great advertising industry has helped by producing a quenchless flow of effective, if sometimes crude, propaganda. Likewise the publishers and the entertainment moguls. Even television has now joined in. Faced with a formidable array of forces, pockets of resistance have been forced onto the defensive, and even to retreat."

How did Muggeridge find all that out? The argument that, after all, non-porn fare on television/radio/books/magazines outnumbers porn fare by 100 to 1 is as persuasive as to argue that a dwelling with a single window only proportionately lets the eye travel to the outdoors. Porn has become a pervasive presence and a counteroffensive should begin. A modest objective would aim at the decision involving the Playboy Channel. Hack away at that station's arrant, demeaning, corrosive obscenity. Tell it no—tell the porn merchants to stay on the other side of midnight, in the dark hours. Revive the spirit of *Miller* v. *California*. Accept the challenge to declare as obscene and without artistic value the sons and daughters of *Deep Throat*, and do so to the satisfaction of American jurors, who, paradoxically, can emerge, as in Cincinnati, as the most sophisticated moral arbiters around. Free them from the guile of the expert who can find enduring social value in ordure.

Is the willpower latently there? Muggeridge completed his thought about porn in America with a distinction. "Love especially can prove a highly subversive force in that it stimulates individual and particular emotions and loyalties, whereas eroticism is generalized and therefore conducive to a conformist state of mind." It would be a significant step forward if we were to take a step back, to how it was in 1975, about which Muggeridge wrote, warning us then of the complacency that besets us now. **NR**

Getting Aroused

What it takes to combat porn

JAY NORDLINGER

So, what is to be done? What can be done to reduce what Mr. Buckley has cited as the "pervasive presence" of porn?

Quite a bit, actually. We are not helpless in the face of this problem. Those who toil in the anti-pornography field say that a *false* sense of helplessness is one of the pornographers' best allies. People feel that they can do nothing, that all must submit, that the courts have ruled we have no choice in the matter, that this is the modern world—get used to it. Yet this is untrue. There are many things to be done, on a number of fronts: legal, policy, and social (and we will take these categories in turn, although the categories tend to blend).

What any anti-pornography campaigner requires, first and foremost, is bravery. He must be prepared to weather a storm of abuse, including, Comstockist! Prude! Censor! Hater of the Bill of Rights! The anti-porn cause calls for thick skin, and both legal and moral confidence.

Consider the case of Utah and the porn czar. Yes, Utah has a "porn czar," appointed earlier this year. She is a deputy attorney general whose job it is to advise communities and citizens what their rights are vis-à-vis the smut in their midst. It is, to many, a funny notion: Utah—stuffy old Mormon Utah—and a *porn czar*. Jay Leno duly lampooned the idea on *The Tonight Show*.

The "czar" is a seasoned prosecutor named Paula Houston, whose sexual standing was questioned early on by local reporters. It was bruited about that she—a Mormon and unmarried—was a *virgin*, which was too much! What would *she* know? But Ms. Houston replied that her sex life was irrelevant and that she would go about her responsibilities, heedless of gibes.

A porn czar—someone to guide people through the thickets of the law—is an attractive idea for states, and, indeed, several of them besides Utah have been considering it. The Utah governor, Mike Leavitt, has said, "If a state legislature is looking for a way to improve the world, this is not an illogical way . . ."

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

A high moment in anti-porn resolve occurred in 1986, when the report of the "Meese Commission" came out. This was a panel charged by President Reagan with investigating pornography and recommending a plan of action. When Ed Meese, the attorney general, announced the commission's findings, he did so in the Great Hall of the Justice Department, in front of two Greek statues of semi-nude figures. The media had a field day with this, insisting that the setting had "stepped on" Meese's "message," leaving him a laughingstock. Here is another challenge in the war against porn: fighting the contention that, as between classical sculpture and Larry Flynt, there is hardly any difference—it's all in the eye of the beholder.

The findings of the commission were, essentially, that

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pornography was not necessarily a "victimless" crime and that the Justice Department needed stronger tools to prosecute it, in the form of new legislation. The commission also urged the creation of a "strike force," to go after porn's major producers and distributors. In due course, the department got both its new legislation and its strike force. And that force struck, to beneficial effect.

Pat Trueman was a key Justice Department player at the time, and he still wages the anti-porn war as director of governmental affairs for the American Family Association. As he tells it, big-time pornographers were brought to trial all over the country and, for the most part, fell like ninepins. Using both obscenity and racketeering laws, the feds were able to make a serious dent in illegal pornography. The industry quickly cleaned up its act, staying away from "child-themed" videos, and scenes featuring rape, mutilation, incest, and the like. Pornographers would take action before the law could, knowing that the authorities were alert and determined. Vigorous enforcement took place during the administration of the first George Bush as well. It was, all in all, a hazardous time for pornographers.

Then came the Clinton years—a boom time for the porn industry, a holiday from anti-obscenity prosecution. Pornographers enjoyed virtually carte blanche, as prosecutors and activists will tell you. In fact, pornographers will tell you as well. A porn producer named Mark Cromer wrote a piece for *The Nation* last February, in which he said, "Whatever collective pain and persecution the industry suffered during the Reagan and Bush the Elder years, when Bill Clinton rolled into the White House . . . [pornographers] saw eight years of relative green lights and blue skies." As a result, porn "has grown into a multibillion-dollar business reaching into nearly every corner of America, culturally, politically, and even economically." (This is the same explosion documented by the *New York Times*'s Frank Rich, in the article cited by Mr. Buckley.)

During the 2000 presidential campaign, *Adult Video News*—the trade journal of porn—referred to the "benevolent neglect that the industry has enjoyed under Janet Reno" and fretted over a potential Republican victory. George W. Bush was indeed elected, and he named as his attorney general the social conservative John Ashcroft—giving pornographers a fright. "Porn Valley," out near L.A., wrote Mr. Cromer, "heard thunderclaps." And as before, pornmakers quickly went about the work of "self-censorship"—for example, there would be no "sex in a coffin." (This also from Mr. Cromer.)

When asked, "What can be done?" anti-pornographers almost invariably say, before all else, *Simply enforce the laws already on the books*. This is the answer that politicians on the stump often give when avoiding the adoption of a hard position. But it is a true and right response in this case. Obscenity is *illegal*, not protected by the First Amendment. And John Ashcroft has made clear that he will—just as the porn industry feared—make anti-obscenity prosecution a priority of the Bush administration. Not even September 11 has changed that.

It matters greatly who controls the Justice Department, who controls the U.S. attorney's offices, who sets the legal and moral tone in America. As *The Nation*'s journalistic pornographer put it, "George W. Bush and John Ashcroft have won half the battle simply by showing up."

ZONING AND MORE

One weapon in the anti-pornography arsenal is zoning: the practice by which cities and towns can sequester X-rated businesses, significantly improving "quality of life." This was a contributor to Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's success in New York. He took on a thriving sex industry—particularly in Times Square—and walled it off. He inaugurated a "new day," as anti-porn activists said. The civil-liberties union cried censorship; *The New Republic* cluck-clucked at the mayor's "Victorian crusade." That crusade was challenged in court, and it lost a few, minor battles. Overall, though, it prevailed. Giuliani said later, "Some people romanticize the way things were [before]. . . . They think it was somehow charming to have graffiti on every wall and sex shops on every block. But remember what it was *really* like: Remember the fear, and the disrespect for people's rights . . . It seemed like no one cared."

■

As one pornographer put it, 'George W. Bush and John Ashcroft have won half the battle simply by showing up.'

■

Janet LaRue, senior legal director at the Family Research Council, says that communities can do more than they generally know about the porn shops that blight them, the outlets known as "sexually oriented businesses" (or SOBs). Some communities have laws on the books that are going unenforced, and some can stand to pass tougher laws. Jay Sekulow is chief counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice. His group is a rich resource for communities, even offering a "model city ordinance." There is little question that communities interested in doing so can sequester and limit porn, if not ban it outright.

One particularly important arena in the porn wars is—believe it or not—the local library: Does it have the right to block access to Internet pornography using computer filters? *Should* it do so? In the courts now is a federal law denying funds to libraries that refuse to block Internet porn. If a practicing conservative politician has a porn issue, it tends to be this one. The American Library Association is adamantly, categorically opposed to *any* filtering at all.

A 1998 case in Loudoun County, Va., received national attention. The library there wanted to block access to Internet porn—but a district-court judge ruled that doing so would violate patrons' First Amendment rights. The principal group fighting the library called itself "Mainstream Loudoun," which is typical of the strategy employed by anti-anti-porn forces: Me mainstream, you fringe.

Libraries, however, have not proven to be completely helpless in the matter. In Minneapolis, a group of librarians filed a claim with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, asserting that a library full of porn meant a "hostile work environment" for them. They were exposed to porn every day—and, worse, they were exposed to men committing lewd acts at the computer terminals. The entire atmosphere was being fouled. The EEOC found that the librarians' claims were justified, and also that they were entitled to financial redress. Librarians from

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around the country are registering their dismay over porn; some are even resigning. They did not sign up to work in virtual porn emporiums, and they are particularly distressed when it is difficult to separate child patrons from Internet smut.

Some anti-porn activists have come up with an intriguing idea: Let there be a separate "domain" for Internet porn, and let all of that porn come under it. The domain would be ".xxx." So, just as we have ".edu" for educational websites, and ".gov" for governmental ones, we would have the triple X for pornography. This would be sort of an Internet zoning law, according to which all porn sites would be ghettoized. Monique Nelson, CEO of Enough Is Enough, says, "We support this for the same reason that in the physical world you can make a separate place for adult bookstores. You can regulate them. We feel that these same concepts should apply to the Internet."

Other activists disagree, however, saying that pornographers would *never* leave ".com" and the rest, and could never be forced to do so. Besides which, law enforcement might grow laxer with regard to Internet porn, thinking that, if it is walled off under ".xxx," it should be left alone—even if it is obscenity, or child pornography, and therefore illegal.

THE VIRTUES OF PRESSURE

Pat Trueman—late of the Justice Department, now with the American Family Association—notes that it is impossible to take on the entire, vast sea of pornography; better to concentrate on a few big fish. His organization, with others, has been concentrating lately on a very big fish, Yahoo, the Internet portal. Yahoo is home to thousands of sex "clubs" that disseminate manifestly illegal pornography. Mr. Trueman would like to see the company prosecuted; in the meantime, he is all for public pressure, and is directing it.

We are hardly talking here about nudies on the order of *Playboy* centerfolds; we are talking about . . . well, Yahoo has clubs devoted to father-daughter incest, complete with pictures, of course. There is—as the American Family Association has reported—a Forced White Wife Club, which "has photos of a man forcing a handgun into the mouth of a woman he is violating." There is an Asphyxia and More Club, featuring "photos of naked women hung by the neck, and others strangled by men." There are Real Rape Fantasies clubs. There is Rob's Necrophilia Fantasy Club, boasting "autopsy photos of naked women and medical-school cadavers. There is also a photo of what appears to be an emaciated concentration-camp victim lying naked in a mass grave next to a deceased child. A sexually suggestive caption is provided." And so on.

Mr. Trueman's group, in concert with Concerned Women for America, the Family Research Council, and others, has been harassing Yahoo without let-up. These organizations issue press releases, write letters, and generally rally public opinion. They are urging a boycott of Yahoo and its advertisers—and there is some evidence that their pressure is working. The company had planned to sell porn videos over the Net, but changed its mind in the wake of negative publicity and a letter campaign. Yet the sex clubs remain, because they are fantastically lucrative for Yahoo, and for other such portals.

The "mainstreaming" of porn has meant that *many* big companies—some of America's most venerable—are now part of "the industry." AT&T, for example, owns the Hot Network, a cable channel that purveys hard-core porn. And then there are the major hotel chains, such as Marriott: They offer porn in all of their rooms, via cable, and this service is hugely profitable for them. Why not prosecute them, if these materials cross into obscenity? Failing that, how about old-fashioned shame? Marriott is known as a straight-laced company—what gives? Often a gust of public disapproval, or the mere prospect of a court battle, is enough to make a company desist.

Bob Rowling is a hero to the anti-porn community. Who is he, and why? He purchased Omni Hotels in 1996, and decided to remove the porn from his chain's rooms. The stuff simply offended him; he did not want to run that kind of business; and he took action, though that action cost him dearly, in revenues. Mr. Rowling is held up as an example of "corporate responsibility"—and of individual conscience, of course, too.

A brief word on advertising: It has, indeed, become "kind of porny," with the Abercrombie & Fitch catalogue—which caught Mr. Buckley's attention—serving as Exhibit A. The only way to do something about *this* is to object: to write in, to complain, to boycott. What is necessary here—in the words of one prosecutor/activist—is "the willingness of the average citizen to get off the couch."

In the case of Abercrombie, it appears that many customers got off their couches. The company has just announced that its next catalogue will be de-porned. Abercrombie brass explained that, in the wake of September 11, a more somber atmosphere should be maintained; but it is not unreasonable to think that public protest played some role—probably the major role—in the company's decision.

A SOCIETAL TURN

There are other anti-porn tools, other notions: Wall Street can be pressured, the mainstreaming of porn businesses resisted. The "responsible investor" can be invoked. Some groups call for more "cyber cops," officers who are trained to deal with Internet porn and its associated crimes. Before the Supreme Court now are several cases involving kids, pornography, and the Net—one of them is called *Ashcroft* v. *ACLU*. The anti-porn crowd stresses the need for judges who do not view the First Amendment as all-tolerating when it comes to smut.

Ultimately, our country probably needs to be "re-moralized," as the historian Gertrude Himmelfarb has written. And Americans need to care about this "pervasive presence." Think what happened to smoking in America when people generally, and elites in particular, became interested: It is now almost a pariah activity. Is pervasive porn a lesser social ill?

No serious anti-porn campaigner is a utopian. None supposes that porn can be made to disappear, or that the Constitution could allow such a thing. But defeatism is unwarranted: Illegal porn can be prosecuted, and legal porn can be discouraged. In this realm, a little stigmatizing can go a long way.

One wise specialist, with close ties to the current administration, says that, in the final analysis, "You have to ask, What do we as citizens want? It's the average Joe who's going to have a lot to say about this. Pornography has always been around, and always will be—but only recently has it really overwhelmed us. I mean, seven-year-olds are looking at it. We can step back. People of common sense and decent morals can say, Enough."

Yes. Enough. **NR**

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THE LONG VIEW

By Rob Long

The Crisis Adviser

Dear Adviser:

My husband comes home from work and is very closemouthed about his day and everything and never wants to just talk or whatever. And we never go anywhere nice, and when he gets the clicker it's just click, click, click all through the channels so another person can't even figure out what's on or anything. And we never talk about what we're feeling. When I ask he just goes, "Well, you know, whatever," and I'm like, How can we have a real relationship when we don't share stuff and all?

Could he be a terrorist?

WONDERING IN WESTOVER

Dear Wondering:

Terrorists are secretive people who lock their emotions away in a dark part of their soul. This enables them to perform terrible acts without remorse. So, yes, your husband could be one of these people. Please contact your local FBI office immediately.

Dear Adviser:

In my work as the CFO of a technology company, I have achieved a certain level of fame, with appearances on CNBC, etc. Since the outbreak of anthrax-laced envelopes, I have taken the precaution of having my 5-year-old son open all of the mail that comes to the house, on the theory that I'm the breadwinner, we have two other kids, etc., etc.

My question is: Should he open it in a sealed, secure location (like our pool house)? Or should we have him moved off-site?

CURIOUS IN CUPERTINO

Dear Curious:

Why not take a page from the federal government and have your son open all mail (family AND business) at a secure off-site location, such as Grandma's house? Or for that matter, why not have Grandma and Grandpa receive the mail at their location (it can be easily forwarded—ask your letter carrier for the form) for opening and inspection? Let's take advantage of this current crisis to get America's Silver Citizens back into action!

Dear Adviser:

Oh my God! Oh my God! The inside of my purse is covered in a white powdery substance! I just opened it and all this white powder just poofed out! And I breathed it! And some got on my skin! Oh my God! Oh my God! I'm going to die! There's white powder everywhere! Oh sweet Jesus I'm dying! I need medicine! I need Cipro! Please God somebody help me! Please God somebody! Oh Lord! Oh my God! I've got anthrax! Oh God!

Wait. Just a sec. It's just a crushed Altoid.

Close one, though.

NERVOUS IN NEWARK

Dear Nervous:

Are you sure they're just Altoids? I mean, really, really sure? They don't look like Altoids. But if you're sure, then I guess there's no need to worry. If you're sure, that is.

Dear Adviser:

My son sits in his room all day just listening to loud music and playing games on his computer. He doesn't come out except to eat—he refuses to eat with the family, he thinks we're all "retards"—and hasn't exchanged a word with his father in six months. He and I barely communicate at all. When I talk to him, just to say "Hi," or "How was your day, dear?" or "Gee, that music is awfully loud, I mean, I like it, it's really hip and happening, but, honey, it's awfully loud," he just rolls his eyes and points to the "Do Not Disturb" sign on his door.

Could he be a terrorist?

UPSET IN UTICA

Dear Upset:

Your son could quite possibly be part of the mysterious al-Qaeda network. I have alerted the FBI and they are on their way to your home.

Dear Adviser:

I am the anchor of a local news broadcast here in the Los Angeles area. Is there any way I can get on "the list" for possible inclusion in the next round of anthrax attacks? I'm concerned that the next wave of them will skip me and hit some of the anchors on the higher-rated competition, which I think is unfair. My goal here is to break into network news, and I think that having my secretary open one of those anthrax-letter dealies would really put me on the map.

LAGGING IN L.A.

Dear Lagging:

Great idea! Why not take the bull by the horns and send some to yourself? Just be sure to misspell a few words in the threatening letter.

Dear Adviser:

Oh my God! Oh my God! I've got a little tickle in the back of my throat! Oh my God! Oh sweet Jesus! Flu-like symptoms! I've got flu-like symptoms! I must have got some anthrax on me! Oh Lord! I'm dying here! I'm going to die!

Wait. Just a sec. It was just a piece of a potato chip caught in my throat.

Close one, though.

NERVOUS IN NEWARK

Dear Nervous:

Are you sure it was just a potato chip? Better call the FBI and have them deal with it. I mean, you never know.

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HELP !!!!

DADDY, WILL THE BRAVE KNIGHTS SURVIVE AND CONQUER THE EVIL DRAGON?
KNOWING AMERICA LIKE I DO, SWEETHEART, I HAVEN'T SEEN TOO MANY HAPPY ENDINGS FOR FIRE-BREATHING DRAGONS.

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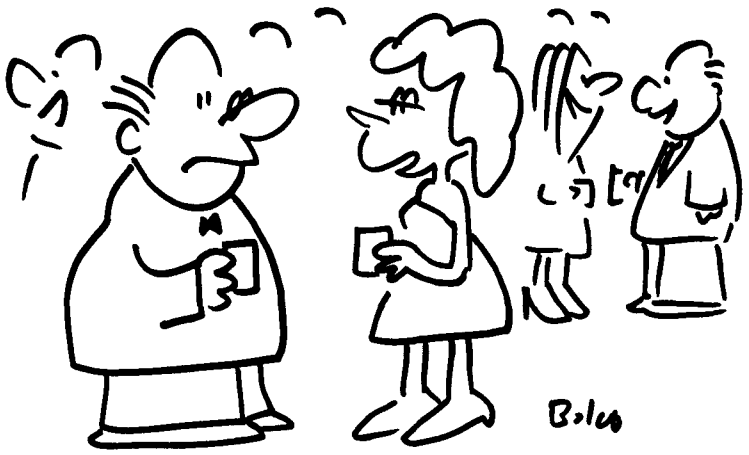

"A self-made man?—you should have subcontracted."

The Buzz on Gore

From deep background, and speaking
Through voice-distorting mikes
That comfort nervous witnesses
Who spill their guts out (yikes!),
Al Gore's most trusted cronies—
Eyes on the Hindu Kush—
Gave interviews to tell why they
Thank God Gore lost to Bush.

—W. H. von Dreele

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

Major Barbara

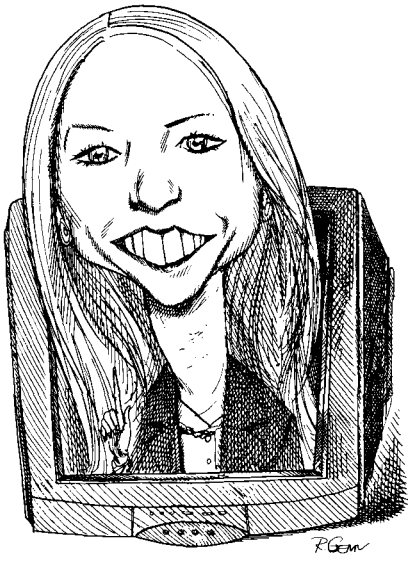
NOEMIE EMERY

The Final Days: A Behind the Scenes Look at the Last, Desperate Abuses of Power by the Clinton White House, by Barbara Olson (Regnery, 258 pp., $27.95)

THE 1990s, as a political era, began on September 10, 1991, with the hearings on the Supreme Court nomination of Clarence Thomas, and ended abruptly ten years and one day later, with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. A key figure in both of these events was Barbara Olson, who rose to prominence during the Thomas hearings, and died in the crash of Flight 77 into the Pentagon. Along the way, she became a pundit superstar, with a near-permanent seat on the Larry King program, fighting the culture wars on a wide range of fronts, from gender issues to impeachment struggles. To some, she was the anti-Hillary: a feisty blonde lawyer in a high-profile marriage (to prominent lawyer, and now solicitor general, Ted Olson), but one who was honest and funny. Her first book was the bestselling *Hell to Pay*, a precise portrait of the unlovable Hillary Clinton herself. Her final book is *The Final Days*, a short, crisp, lethal summation of the events of January 2001, as the Clintons prepared to vacate the White House, and finally did so, taking much of the furniture with them. Who can forget those halcyon days of greed, pardons, and general thuggery? Few will as long as this book is around.

The Clintons' last month in the White House shocked the country, and

Noemie Emery is a writer on American politics and history.



Barbara Olson by Roman Genn

helped get the contested presidency of George W. Bush off to its unexpected good start. Even some Clinton supporters were stunned, for the first time, into condemning the couple. Olson, however, sees nothing surprising in the Clintons' final days; they differed in degree, not in kind, from the preceding years of skulduggery.

The scope of the Clintons' offenses was vast, but easily divisible into two major categories: greed and abuses of power. Under greed, we can put down Hillary's book deal, the grand theft of the White House furniture, and the ornate His and Hers office spaces in New York. As for the book deal, the freshman senator made off with the third-highest advance in history. (The two higher went to the Pope and her husband. "The Pope, of course, was older, and had a few more accomplishments," Olson tells us. "But then, the Pope has never been before a grand jury.") Some were churlish enough to suggest that the book deal looked like a payoff, as her publisher was part of a vast conglomerate that owned television stations and a film studio, and had a huge stake in regulations on which the Senate was voting; but few were boorish enough to push the matter too far.

Despite the book-deal windfall, Hillary—with two immense houses to furnish—set out, while still First Lady, to shake down her friends. Olson writes that "friends of Mrs. Clinton solicited others, saying 'Would you please buy this silverware, these gifts . . . ?'" And yes, they would, to the tune of $190,000 in gifts—for a woman who had just signed an $8 million book deal, and whose husband stood to make $100,000 a speech.

And this was on top of what the Clintons had managed to take out of the White House itself. "In January 2000," writes Olson, "the Clintons began shipping furniture to their $1.7 million Chappaqua home, despite concerns raised by White House chief usher Gary Walters about whether they were entitled to remove the items. Walters rightly believed they were government property, donated as part of a $396,000 White House redecoration project in 1993." Then there were the offices: Hillary's will cost taxpayers more than twice as much as Senator Charles Schumer's; Bill's first choice, in midtown's posh Carnegie Hall Tower, would have cost taxpayers more than the office tab for *all* other living ex-presidents combined; and even the Harlem office he was forced to settle for is more expensive than that of any other ex-president.

Let us turn now to abuses of power. As Olson notes, Clinton had always been fond of executive orders, and, as his remaining days in office dwindled, his fondness only increased. "No debate, no hearings, no cumbersome votes . . . Clinton loved the feel of this kind of power, and [his] last three weeks in office turned into a gusher of executive orders and presidential decrees." In his final days, Clinton appropriated millions of acres for the federal government, signed a great many dubious treaties, and laid on a blizzard of new regulations that could—and did, until recent events made them irrelevant—tie his successor in knots.

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Most flagrant of all were the pardons. On his final day, Clinton commuted the sentences of Susan Rosenberg and Linda Sue Evans, who were associated with the murder of policemen in a 1981 armored-car robbery (and also with the bombing of the U.S. Capitol in 1983). Also released was cocaine dealer Carlos Vignali, son of a high-rolling donor to Democrats; Hillary's brother charged $200,000 for his help in pressing the case. The most noxious example of mercy-for-money was Marc Rich, a notorious fugitive whose ex-wife had showered the Clintons with cash. On his last day as president, Olson writes, Clinton "issued a torrent of 140 pardons and 36 commutations." One TV commentator observed: "Not since the opening of the gates of the Bastille have so many criminals been liberated on a single day."

All of the flaws the Clintons had ever displayed swelled into one obscene bubble. Olson summarizes: "Bill and Hillary Clinton ended their eight years in the White House with a grand-finale pyrotechnic show of historic proportions, [reprising] the lowlights of their two terms in office by taking public property, soliciting gifts and favors, selling the powers of the presidency to friends, cronies, [and] family members."

■

In the final days, all the Clintons' flaws swelled into one obscene bubble.

■

It is impossible, of course, to read this book now except through the lens of September 11, with some passages having new meaning. It is, for example, impossible to read a line like "Soviet aggression had been replaced by a number of particularly venomous threats, from Timothy McVeigh to Osama bin Laden," without shivering. Our view of Bill Clinton has also changed. The relatively generous assessment that Olson accords him—of having, at least, reigned over a period of peace and tranquility—must also look rather different, because we now know that the murderous attacks were even then being prepared. The terrorists believed that they would pay almost no price for their actions, unless they coincided with an impending impeachment, or the discovery of semen on the dress of the president's girlfriend. The Clinton "legacy," too, is becoming clearer: He will be remembered less as our Warren Harding—a petty crook, and grand lecher—than as the Neville Chamberlain of his generation, who wrote the book on how not to respond to terrorists' actions, and whose refusal to take them seriously set the battle back several years.

Barbara Olson would be delighted to know that the post-attack Clintons have stayed strictly in character. Bill is in despair at losing his place at center stage—all that pain he's not feeling—and he fears that the drama will wash out his memory. He is "worrying that his peace-and-prosperity presidency will be recast as a footnote to the Bush family dynasty," his friends tell *New York* magazine. As for Hillary, she equates the raw hatred of the terrorists to the protests she encountered in 1994 while selling her health plan.

George W. Bush promised in 2000 to "change the tone" of politics, and to some extent he did try to; but the fact remains that, until September 11, we were living in Bill Clinton's world—a culture defined by very large fights over very small issues, payback for injuries barely remembered, and, above all, unending hostility. On the last Sunday of her life, Barbara Olson was a guest on *Washington Journal*, a C-SPAN morning call-in program that is frequently civil. This time, it was not. The topic was the Thomas hearings, on their tenth anniversary, and the calls that came in were electric with fury, as if no time at all had passed. Names, charges, and threats were flung around wildly. At one point, Bill Press, Olson's co-panelist, became rattled, pleading for tolerance, saying that people could argue as friends. But the hate kept on coming. Close to the end, one woman called Olson "evil" and said she was "too filled with hate" to live long. On the very last point, she was only too accurate. Two days later, Barbara Olson was killed when her plane hit the Pentagon, and that age, and its rancor, died with her. It is a great shame that she is no longer among us, to fight on in this braver new world. **NR**

Mr. Nixon Selects

ROBERT D. NOVAK

The Rehnquist Choice: The Untold Story of the Nixon Appointment That Redefined the Supreme Court, by John W. Dean (Free Press, 333 pp., $26)

"WHO the hell is that clown?" President Richard M. Nixon asked an aide after a White House meeting on July 1, 1971. He was referring to an assistant attorney general wearing Hush Puppies and a pink shirt that clashed with a psychedelic tie. "Is he Jewish?" Nixon went on. "He looks it. That's a hell of a costume he's wearing, just like a clown." The president was told the man was William H. Rehnquist.

The name didn't stick. On July 24, Nixon referred to him as "Renchburg." On October 5, Sen. Barry Goldwater, in a telephone conversation with Nixon, brought up a "young fellow in the Justice Department. You know I can't think of his name. Oh, God, his name slips me." Then it came to him: "Ah, Bill Rensler." "Oh," responded Nixon, "I know Rensler well, an excellent man." At that moment, the president had no idea that 16 days later he would be naming "Renchburg" or "Rensler" to the U.S. Supreme Court.

John Dean brings this inside information to our attention in his new book, which benefits not just from secretly recorded White House tapes—recently released but largely overlooked—but also from Dean's own experience as Nixon's White House counsel. This inside look at chaos in deciding who should fill Supreme Court vacancies is a delight for political buffs; considerably less delightful is the counterpoint of Dean's 30-year-old mea culpa. Ever since turning against Nixon on Watergate in an unsuccessful effort to avoid jail time himself, Dean has been apolo-

Mr. Novak is a syndicated columnist for the *Chicago Sun-Times* and a CNN commentator.

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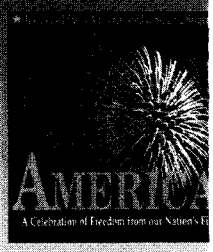

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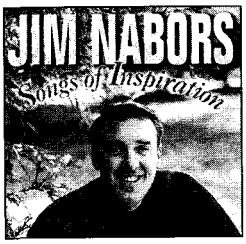

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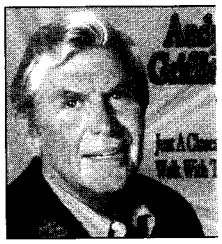

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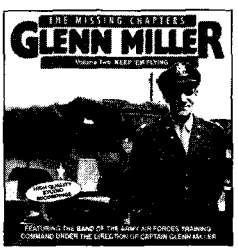

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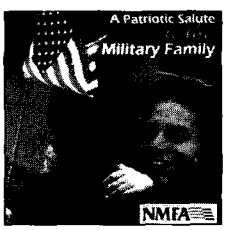

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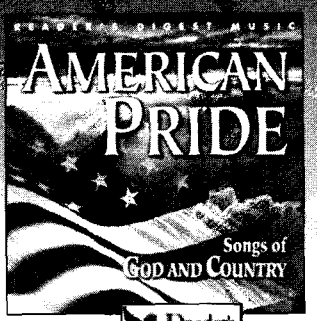

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gizing for being a fiercely ambitious (*Blind Ambition* was his first book) Republican yuppie.

His new confession is that as a 34-year-old presidential aide, he instigated the unlikely nomination of Bill Rehnquist. Dean does penance for Rehnquist's long tenure as chief justice and, implicitly, for George W. Bush's presidency. He laments "the thoughtlessness of my somewhat irresponsible adventure as a young White House staffman playing for a piece of history."

Dean maintains that scandal-tainted Justice Abe Fortas, forced off the bench in 1969, was the victim of conspiracy rather than his own greed, and also claims that Nixon concocted a plot to take control of the Supreme Court by forcing out liberal justices. Surely, however, it was no plot when, in September 1971, Nixon found himself with two high-court vacancies thanks to the simultaneous resignations of Justices Hugo Black and John Marshall Harlan; and *The Rehnquist Choice* records Nixon's confused course in making those selections.

"I just will not send a God damn liberal up to that court! Okay?" Nixon told attorney general John Mitchell. He moved no closer to addressing issues during five weeks of often circular discussion with his aides. Seemingly oblivious to the hidden tape recorders, Nixon engaged in what amounted to a rolling bull session as he talked about a wide selection of possible justices, including even Vice President Spiro T. Agnew. The president, who had lost Senate confirmation votes on two earlier high-court nominations, talked about new possibilities with little or no background information. Vaguely interested in picking a Catholic, Nixon at one point considered Lawrence Walsh (later the infamous Iran-Contra special counsel)—but only "if he is a Catholic. If he isn't a Catholic, forget it." Nobody responded, but Walsh happened to be a Presbyterian.

If Nixon was vague about Catholics, he was adamant about Jews. "On the Jew side," he said, the only person he would consider was the district attorney of Philadelphia (and later U.S. senator) Arlen Specter, because he was "strong on law enforcement." But later he appeared to forget Specter: "As long as I'm sitting in the chair, there's not going to be any Jew appointed to that court. [No Jew] can be right on the criminal-law issue."

After the Senate rejected his two previous southerners, Nixon was determined to go to the South for at least one more court nominee, to pin down Dixie in 1972 against a possible renewed independent candidacy by George Wallace. He decided quickly on Richard Poff, a relatively obscure Republican congressman from Virginia whose principal legal experience was as a longtime member of the House Judiciary Committee. But Poff's signature on the anti-integration Southern Manifesto, as well as his "no" vote on every civil-rights bill, guaranteed more than 30 senators would vote against him. Not relishing that prospect, Poff decided to pull out just as he was about to be nominated rather than subject his family to a bitter confirmation fight.

■

'I'm not for women, frankly, in any job,' Nixon rambled.

■

Nixon was beside himself, blaming Poff's opponents rather than Poff. "He's going to go for a real right-winger now," aide-confidant H. R. Haldeman opined in his diary, "someone worse than Poff, and really stick it [to the liberals]." Nixon's choice appeared to be Sen. Robert Byrd, who 30 years ago was not today's prestigious institutional memory of the Senate but, as described by Haldeman, "more reactionary than Wallace." Dean describes Nixon as "delighting in Byrd's non-qualifications" when the president mused: "Never practiced law, has only been a lawyer seven years and a member of the Ku Klux Klan probably." An incredulous John Mitchell asked: "You want to put his name in?" Nixon: "Put his name in, yeah."

Actually, Nixon was not serious about Byrd (though poor Byrd appeared to be), and was interested only in enraging such liberals as columnist Mary McGrory. The president soon decided on an equally unlikely southern choice: Herschel Friday, a Democratic bond lawyer from Little Rock, Ark., who was pushed by fellow bond lawyer Mitchell and, Dean now reveals, Chief Justice Warren Burger. Although Nixon was not in the practice of actually vetting his possible court nominees, Dean was sent to Little Rock to interview Friday. Dean returned to the White House reporting that the prospective justice was "a blank sheet of paper" with no opinions on the issues of the day. "God damn him," Nixon responded. "We're not going to have this. And I'm not going to put a sleeper on the court."

Meanwhile, for the other vacancy, Nixon improbably was searching for a woman. "I'm not for women, frankly, in any job," he said in his tape-recorded ramblings. "I don't want any of them around." But his wife Pat was pressuring him to name a woman and Nixon ruefully conceded that "it isn't a man's world anymore" and that a woman justice could "pick up . . . a half-percentage point" in what he feared would be a close 1972 election. The woman justice would have to be "hard-line as hell," said Nixon. The nominee he wanted was somebody who ordinarily would not have been considered for the nation's highest court: Mildred Lillie, a conservative Democratic state appeals judge in California. "A conservative woman from California," exulted Nixon. "God. That will kill them."

The White House submitted the names of Friday and Lillie to the American Bar Association, whose judicial review committee rejected both as unqualified. That took Nixon off the hook—with Burger for Friday, and with his wife for Lillie. But it was now October 19, and after six weeks of indecision, his promised announcement date was two days away. He quickly turned to Lewis Powell, the distinguished Richmond lawyer who at age 64 previously had been considered too old. For the other vacancy, aides pitched a surprise: Howard Baker, a 45-year-old first-term senator from Tennessee. Nixon immediately agreed, without much enthusiasm. "He isn't the greatest stand-up guy," said Nixon, "but he's young." Howard Baker was stunned when Mitchell gave him the news, and characteristically asked time to think it over. "Apparently," Dean writes, "he was frantically considering his finances, or searching his soul or both." Nixon grum-

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bled that "he just can't screw around forever."

Dean had been quietly pressing the 47-year-old Rehnquist as a possible nominee. Indicating his own standard for a justice, Mitchell said Rehnquist offered "no political positive for the president." Nixon asked: "How the hell could you put just a guy who's an assistant attorney general on the court?" Rehnquist himself listed his disqualifications: "I'm not from the South, I'm not a woman, and I'm not mediocre." But Dean enlisted a brilliant advocate for Rehnquist in White House lawyer Richard Moore, who two years later would contradict Dean's testimony before the Senate Watergate Committee. Moore, a 57-year-old white-haired lawyer who often described himself as a father figure in Nixon's young White House, could get Nixon's ear, as Dean could not. He convinced the president when he described Rehnquist as a law clerk to the eminent justice Robert Jackson who had graduated first in his class at Stanford Law School. "It clicked," Dean concludes.

"While Baker dithered," Dean writes, "the opportunity of a lifetime was slipping little by little from reach." When the young senator finally called Mitchell to accept, it was too late. Nixon wanted Rehnquist. Mitchell was ordered to "turn Baker off." Dean is neither a journalist nor a historian and so does not record Baker's reaction to this extraordinary turnabout.

Rehnquist was never vetted, and Nixon never seriously discussed his judicial philosophy with him (or with Powell or any other court candidate). "Just be as mean and rough as they said you were," the president told the future chief justice—after he was confirmed by the Senate—in their only private conversation.

In a mean-spirited "afterword," Dean revisits—and endorses—the attacks levied against Rehnquist in his Senate confirmation process. Nevertheless, Dean has performed a valuable service in recording Nixon's tortuous course to a decision. The present John Dean would not agree, but it is providential that this chaotic process produced, in William Rehnquist, the closest Richard Nixon ever came to putting a strict-constructionist judge on the Supreme Court. **NR**

Shaving off the Fringe

ARTHUR HERMAN

A Time for Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism, by Jonathan M. Schoenwald (Oxford, 338 pp., $35)

THE great political story of our time is the collapse of American liberalism and its standard-bearer, the New Deal Democratic party. Historians and journalists have generally shied away from this story, and for good reason: It is a complex human tale of tragic, even epic proportions, and telling it requires the skill of a Shakespeare or a Melville. Furthermore, since most people who write about American history are liberals, the task would also pose an excruciating question: "How did the principles and ideals I myself uphold fail America?" Self-examination on this scale is an essentially conservative instinct; liberals, as we have learned, prefer to "move on."

So instead of focusing on why liberalism failed, a new crop of historians has tackled a slightly different, and less existentially challenging, question: How did conservatism suddenly become so successful, rising up from Barry Goldwater's landslide defeat in 1964 to dominate the national political agenda? Just four years after Goldwater's loss, Republicans won the White House, and—with time out for two white southern Democrats masquerading as conservatives—have controlled it ever since. In 1994, they even won control of the House of Representatives—an event that would have been close to unimaginable for an observer in 1964.

Jonathan Schoenwald's book is the latest attempt to explain this phenomenon. It follows closely on the heels of

Mr. Herman is the author of the forthcoming book *How the Scots Invented the Modern World*.

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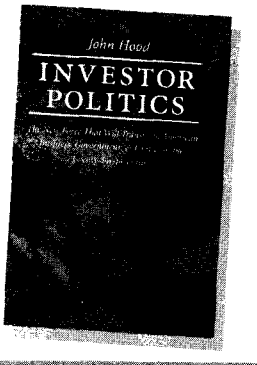

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Rick Perlstein's *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus*; Matthew Dallek's *The Right Moment: Ronald Reagan's First Victory and the Decisive Turning Point in American Politics*; and Lisa McGirr's *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. Like these other books, it treats conservatives and conservatism with respect, if not sympathy; this is certainly flattering to members of the American Right, who are accustomed to being ignored or reviled by this country's academic establishment.

The problem with Schoenwald's presentation is that he leaves out more than half of the story. The true explanation of conservatism's success is the fact that American liberalism came to embrace an unrealizable radical agenda at the cost of its electoral support and its own integrity; and this whole history of liberal collapse appears in Schoenwald's book only intermittently, as muted noises offstage. This is not quite *Hamlet* without the prince, but it is close.

The book does, however, have considerable merit, because Schoenwald doesn't allow his own liberalism to stand in the way of a reasonable and plausible thesis. He argues that in the 1960s, conservatives gained their foothold in the Republican party—and in the American mainstream—by reining in the fringe groups (such as the John Birch Society) that had defined their movement in the previous decade. The protagonists of this effort, and therefore of Schoenwald's book, are familiar to longtime readers of NATIONAL REVIEW: William F. Buckley Jr., William Rusher, Goldwater organizer F. Clifton White, M. Stanton Evans of the Young Americans for Freedom, and (of course) Ronald Reagan. Schoenwald's narrative focuses on how these movement leaders exorcised the demons of right-wing extremism, and thus made conservatism fit for prime time and ready to embrace a nation.

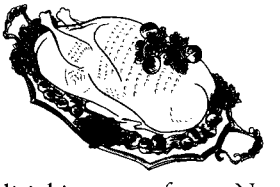
Schoenwald is clearly fascinated by the Birchers, including their millionaire founder, Robert Welch, and their charismatic spokesman, General Edwin Walker. One almost detects a note of regret when Schoenwald is forced to leave behind these flamboyant characters, who gave Cold War conservatism its "paranoid style," and allowed generations of liberal journalists to dismiss the supporters of the American Right as—in Richard Rovere's words—"bat-haunted Liberty Women of the U.S.A.," running around in tennis shoes with petitions to impeach Earl Warren and to ban fluoride from the water supply. Buckley and his NATIONAL REVIEW challenged the Birchers head-on, and if Schoenwald tends to exaggerate the significance of Birchers as part of the pre-Reagan conservative movement (totally ignoring, for example, the role played by Joe McCarthy), he does appreciate the steadfastness of Buckley and others in driving off the conservative reservation a movement that, for all its populist appeal, represented a long-term political liability.

■

Movement leaders exorcised the demons of right-wing extremism.

■

Grass-roots activism remains the enduring strength of the conservative movement; without it, no political success would have been possible against a firmly entrenched liberal Democratic establishment. Schoenwald's most interesting chapters tell the story of how conservative intellectuals spawned mass organizations—similar to that of the Birchers—in order to mobilize voters, but without tipping over into paranoid anti-Communism or race-baiting. One of his best sections describes the founding of the Young Americans for Freedom, who drew up their manifesto of conservative principles at the Buckley estate in Sharon, Connecticut. (The so-called Sharon Statement came almost two years before left-wing students issued their more famous Port Huron Statement.) Schoenwald is quite shrewd in describing how YAF steeled young conservatives with the habits of politicking, intellectual combat, and coalition-building.



Schoenwald then describes how, by the early 1970s, an ideologically tamed but activist conservative movement had helped the Republican party capture that elusive Holy Grail of American elections: the political center. As early as the California gubernatorial election in 1966, only two years after the Goldwater debacle, Ronald Reagan "succeeded in demonstrating that it was possible to assemble [a conservative coalition] that would not only refrain from offending liberal Republicans and conservative Democrats but would actually attract them too." Unfortunately, Schoenwald doesn't push this line of analysis far enough. What drew voters to the Reagan camp, of course, was the fact that the liberal Democrats' pavilions were already on fire. The riots in Watts in 1965 and later in Detroit, along with Vietnam, the radicalization of American universities, and the rise of Black Power, were more than just liberal "gaffes," as Schoenwald terms them, which conservative Republicans used to their political advantage. They were catastrophes, which demonstrated to millions of reasonable Americans that the promises of American liberalism had been a sham, and that the heirs to Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal coalition were no longer capable of governing the country. This fact needs to sink in if liberal historians like Schoenwald are to understand fully the success of their political opponents. In the end, conservatives took over because liberals had proven themselves to be politically and intellectually bankrupt.

Among these liberals were Republicans of the Nelson Rockefeller-William Scranton mold. Indeed, Schoenwald's next book could be about how Reagan, Buckley, and the rest, having tamed their own hard Right, set about checkmating the Republican Left. Because the issue all along was not how to attract liberal Republicans, but how to defeat them; just as the issue was not how to make the conservative message more attractive to mainstream voters, but to show them that conservatism offered relevant solutions to the problems of post–New Deal America—including, most notably, the self-immolation of what had been its dominant political creed.

Schoenwald does note that by 1968 "the term *radical* became more strictly associated with the Left than the Right." To really put one's finger on the cause of conservative success, though, one need only ask: Whose fault was that? **NR**

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No Third Rail

KEVIN A. HASSETT

Investor Politics: The New Force That Will Transform American Business, Government, and Politics in the Twenty-First Century, by John Hood (Templeton, 308 pp., $24.95)

In the post-Reagan era, conservatives have aggressively pursued two major economic-policy objectives: lower marginal tax rates and the privatization of Social Security. On taxes, the struggle is ongoing, but Republicans have won more battles than they have lost; marginal tax rates are now about half as high as they were when Reagan took office. The Social Security skirmishes, however, are another story. Every election year, conservatives roll out plans for privatization; Democrats respond with highly effective efforts to induce hysteria, by suggesting that the GOP is preparing to float America's senior citizens away on an iceberg.

One could, therefore, forgive right-wing politicians if they felt a vague yearning to talk about something else. But the fact is, we *have* to talk about Social Security. As John Hood makes abundantly clear in his insightful new book, the consequences of the Social Security debate are immense. Indeed, its outcome will profoundly shape the political history of the 21st century. And this, says Hood, is *good* news.

His book provides ample cause for optimism. It begins with a carefully researched, albeit lengthy, history of the welfare state: Much of American political history involves pitched battles between those with property and those without, with the latter seeking to use the confiscatory power of government to finance generous entitlements. This issue was, Hood reminds us, a central concern for our Founding Fathers. The reason Thomas Jefferson supported an agrarian rather than a commercial republic was that he foresaw that industrial prosperity would cause farmers to migrate to cities. When that happened, the farmers would lose their vested property interests, and democracy's ideal citizenry would be lost. Ordinary laborers would become dependent on their employers, and, in Jefferson's words, "dependence begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition." He viewed this situation as the antithesis of farming, which—because farmers own their capital and develop a protective sense of community—is conducive to public virtue.

Hood is an able policy analyst, and carefully documents how well founded were Jefferson's fears. Over time, conflicts between those with property and those without dramatically reshaped our economic landscape. Most important, big, intrusive government programs sprang up that have had the self-sustaining effect of encouraging citizens not to acquire wealth. The most significant of these is Social Security, which collects 15.3 percent of a worker's salary (half from the worker and half from the employer) and promises to pay benefits upon retirement. Since 15.3 percent is well above the desired saving rate of most people, the policy virtually guarantees that a large share of the populace will have nothing in the bank. This, in turn, creates a moat around our bloated government, and a barrier between our society and the ideal proposed by Jefferson.

But the moat has grown shallow. Investments have a funny property that has worked a quiet magic over the years: Their returns compound. Many Americans have regularly put small amounts of money into private investments, and these stakes are now impressive. Armed with newfound wealth, many are again pursuing Jefferson's property-based society, and aggressively supporting limits on large and intrusive government. Their voices have been added to those of traditional property owners, and this new coalition has acquired significant political might. Today, as a result, it is far less politically risky to advocate Social Security privatization and other free-market policies.

Mr. Hassett is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

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Since the case for privatization is so strong, we can expect to see it broadcast to this ready audience with increasing urgency. Republicans will quietly renew their efforts later this year, when President Bush's Social Security Commission issues its report. Other—surprising—voices may soon join them. Indeed, one can always ascertain how strongly the facts support a conservative policy by inspecting Democratic rhetoric. When the evidence becomes overwhelming—welfare reform comes to mind—then the policy often turns out to have been a Democratic idea all along. Already there are rumblings. At some point soon, then, it is likely that Democrats will embrace partial privatization of Social Security. After that, the rest of the Social Security program will likely change. With investors a large and growing voting bloc, it will be easy to enlarge the private accounts.

What happens after that? What will the Left and the Right argue about if taxes and Social Security have been fixed once and for all? It is here that *Investor Politics* makes its strongest contribution. Having carefully constructed a framework for interpreting political conflicts and the policies that have resulted from them, Hood goes on to muse about the types of reforms that might be possible once everyone has an ownership stake in society. In so doing, he provides an interesting road map to the likely policy debates of the 21st century. After privatization, just about everyone will recognize the tremendous possibilities associated with private ownership. New policies, once unthinkable, may become possible. Hood lays out a description of many of these, and—for an inside-the-Beltway wonk, at least—it is entertainment of the highest order. Who needs government unemployment insurance? Why not let individuals invest their own money in private policies, or provide "unemployment savings accounts"? Other areas—including education, welfare, and health policy—are just as ripe for similar reforms. After having a taste of freedom and control, American voters might never turn back.

Such a rosy scenario is no sure thing, but its probability will undoubtedly be highly positively correlated with the sales of this book. While it is definitely not good beach reading, *Investor Politics* is chock-full of interesting historical anecdotes, clever policy analysis, and surprising musings. I highly recommend it to any reader interested in understanding how our government turned into an entitlement trough, and how much it might change if Republicans are able to win just one more battle. **NR**

SHOAL OF SHARKS

"Oh, look at all the porpoise!" someone shouted
While passengers ran to snap their cameras;
But what they leaned toward was a shoal of sharks
Before us, moving like a floating island:
A seething multitude of tails and fins
Fleeing the fury of a hurricane
Hundreds of miles away. They splashed and swarmed,
Slashing the sea to threads of hissing foam
Beneath us, tossing bellies to the sun,
Staring into the blood pits of our eyes
Ferocious for the flesh and stench of us.
Lucky for us high on our high-tech ark
Looking back on life's primeval broth
At such perpetual and perfect kin.

—RICHARD O'CONNELL

■ ART ■

Master Craftsman

ROGER KIMBALL

BORN in Philadelphia in 1844, Thomas Eakins is one of America's few indisputably great painters. His friend Walt Whitman—the subject of a splendid 1888 portrait by Eakins—insisted that he was not so much a painter as a "force": high praise from the cosmic bard. Today, many critics conclude that Eakins's later portraits—searingly frank yet also gentle, respectful, affirmative—have earned him a place alongside such 19th-century masters of psychological realism as Courbet, Manet, and Degas.

The comprehensive exhibition of Eakins's work now up at the Philadelphia Museum of Art—it includes some 200 objects—amply confirms that judgment. The son of a writing master, Eakins from the beginning pursued his art with a deliberate, workmanlike mastery of craft. He once said that the studio of his friend William Merritt Chase was "an atelier" whereas his own studio was "a workshop."

Eakins's passion for exactness and technical precision is evident throughout his oeuvre, from the perspectival and anatomical studies he did as a student through his meticulous paintings of boaters and other sportsmen to his late experiments in serial photography (on some of which he collaborated with Eadweard Muybridge). It is no accident that some of Eakins's most famous pictures are of men of science, especially surgeons.

Like all genuinely original artists, Eakins was deeply traditional. That is to say, his originality issued from his fertile assimilation of certain artistic conventions and techniques. In 1866, after studying briefly at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Eakins departed for Paris, where he studied with Jean-Léon Gérôme at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Excursions to Madrid and Seville brought him into contact with the work

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of Velázquez and Ribera, the two old masters whose tenebrist palettes and unflinching exploration of character most decisively influenced the aesthetic temperature of his work.

Because Europe was the inescapable source of artistic tradition in the 1860s, Eakins apprenticed in Paris. But unlike such popular society portraitists as John Singer Sargent, who became a professional expatriate in London, Eakins found his vocation as a distinctively American painter. "If America is to produce great painters," he wrote late in life, young artists should "remain in America to peer deeper into the heart of American life." In 1870, Eakins returned to Philadelphia, never to set foot in Europe again.

It was in the matter of peering "deeper into the heart" that Eakins differed most profoundly from painters like Sargent and Chase, whose slick technique and tendency to flatter their clients made them both rich. Eakins never flattered his sitters. His art is a masculine art: unfussy, blunt, direct. He preferred to explore the truth of what he saw, which is not to say that he did not discover beauty or dignity in his contemplation. Some of his portraits—*The Concert Singer* (1890–92) and *Maud Cook* (1895), for example—are positively ravishing; none lacks dignity.

Yet the critic who observed that Eakins was an "annihilator of vanity" was right. Even when he preserves a façade, Eakins glimpses the human melancholy behind it. Many clients complained that he made them look older than they were. In fact, Eakins painted very slowly and tended not to talk much while painting; this often lulled his sitters into a meditative repose, bereft of the rejuvenating sparkle that full attention brings. Some of his most penetrating portraits—of his wife (1900), of the singer Edith Mahon (1904), of his friend Amelia Van Buren (1891)—discreetly exploit tokens of aging to suggest the pathos of mortality.

All this made Eakins a specialty taste. Although respected by other artists and a handful of critics, he never had a wide following. Consequently, many of his portraits are of friends, family, or students. There was also some mild scandal. In 1886, for example, when he was director of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Eakins sought to illustrate a point of anatomy by removing a loincloth from a male model in a drawing class in which female students were present; he was promptly dismissed.

Nor did his unsentimental treatment of certain subjects recommend him to established taste. The surgeon's blood-spattered hand in *The Gross Clinic* (1875) led the squeamish jury to reject it as "unsightly" when it was first exhibited at the Centennial Exhibition of 1876. The painting—one of Eakins's most famous—was finally sold to a medical school for the insulting sum of $200. In 1894, an embittered Eakins wrote that "My honors are misunderstanding, persecution, & neglect, enhanced because unsought."

It was not until the early 1900s that Eakins began to attract significant public interest. In 1902, when he was in his late 50s, he was finally invited to join the National Academy of Design. He painted a bust-length self-portrait as a "diploma picture" to mark the occasion. A preparatory oil sketch, which Eakins completed in a single session, shows him head-on, half swallowed by shadows. Everything below the neck is lost in a scumbled darkness. The artist's face is full of weary sadness, resigned but unconquered. In the finished portrait, Eakins brought himself forward into a warm, invigorating light and accoutered himself in coat and tie. His head is cocked to the right, his gaze is even, sure, assessing. The sadness is still there, but so is a dignified humanity.

It is instructive to contrast Eakins's portraits with those of such 20th-century stars as Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud. In a curious way such painters have become the Sargents of today: facile purveyors of expected images to the chic and well-connected. The difference of course is that establishment taste is now cheerfully "anti-establishment." While Sargent idealized his subjects, painters like Bacon and Freud diminish them. Bacon systematically smudged and distorted the faces of his sitters; Freud saddles them with a ghastly dermatological emergency. The announced intention of these procedures is greater honesty and psychological depth; they are supposed to be keys to authenticity, revealing humanity in all its wretchedness if not, indeed, its depravity. But the result is a dehumanizing art that depends for its effect on a handful of visual clichés.

As this fine exhibition demonstrates, Eakins's art towers above art-world fads: It is the real thing, a permanent cultural possession and sustaining inspiration. *Thomas Eakins: American Realist* remains on view in Philadelphia through Jan. 6, 2002. It then travels to the Musée d'Orsay in Paris (Feb. 5 through May 12, 2002) and the Metropolitan Museum in New York (June 18 through Sept. 15, 2002). **NR**

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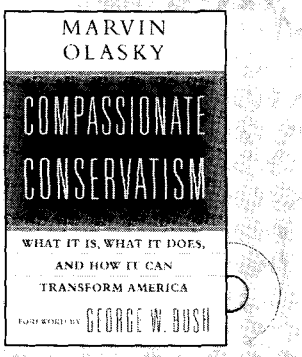

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■ SHELF LIFE ■

Hits and Mises

MICHAEL POTEMRA

THE Intercollegiate Studies Institute has added a couple of impressive new volumes to its Library of Modern Thinkers series. *Ludwig von Mises: The Man and His Economics* (226 pp., $14.95) by Israel M. Kirzner is a lucid exposition of the work of this seminal classical-liberal thinker. "When Mises published his *Human Action* in 1949," Kirzner writes, "the [economics] profession considered it as perhaps the last gasp of a moribund tradition"; but the succeeding half-century saw the global triumph of Mises's principles. Notable among his ideas was the insight that the market is not a state of equilibrium, but a dynamic process of continual correction. This explains why freedom of entrepreneurship is so important to the success of a society: An entrepreneur is someone with the economic incentive to diagnose what a society is lacking, at least with regard to its material needs, and find a way to fill that need.

Kirzner's presentation is accessible to the lay reader; John Zmirak's *Wilhelm Röpke: Swiss Localist, Global Economist* (240 pp., $14.95) actually goes further in this direction, rising toward literature. This work offers a sensitive and nuanced account of another free-market hero, one who stressed the importance of the social and moral principles that provide the underpinning without which economic freedom and long-term prosperity cannot survive. Zmirak is at pains, however, to point out that while Röpke recognized the importance of traditional values, he had no illusions about the old order in Europe: "He dispensed with the paternalist nostalgia that such reactionaries [as Charles Maurras] . . . purveyed as an alternative to the utopias of the Left. Röpke pointed to infamous examples of aristocratic cruelty that were perpetrated and tolerated under the old, pre-revolutionary European system. These abuses were the inevitable effects, he argued, of feudalism—a system which he refused to romanticize, but instead saw as the calcified remnants of coercion and confiscation, hallowed only by the passage of time and the mystifications of ideology."

It's easy enough for conservatives to condemn the excesses of the French Revolution, but it's equally important to realize that it had deeper causes than the momentary thirst for blood of a Paris mob. To preserve the virtues of the old order, while giving no quarter to its excesses, was the life work of Röpke.

■ If you want to start a fight with music people, or anybody else for that matter, just bring up Wagner. British philosopher—and former member of Parliament—Bryan Magee has just weighed in with a full-throated—and utterly engaging—defense of this most reviled of 19th-century composers. In *The Tristan Chord: Wagner and Philosophy* (Henry Holt, 398 pp., $35), Magee doesn't soft-pedal Wagner's virulent anti-Semitism, but does an excellent job of disentangling the greatness of his artistic achievement from his obvious failings as a human being.

A key to understanding Wagner's music, Magee contends persuasively, is that Wagner was not just influenced by the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer but indeed saw himself as an evangelist for it. (In her diary, Wagner's wife—clearly thinking it an unusual occurrence—described a certain evening's discussion as follows: "In the evening no Kant-Schopenhauer.") Schopenhauer, like Buddha, saw longing as the source of pain and unhappiness; in his greatest operas, Wagner wrestled with the problem of how to depict this condition artistically and perhaps, thereby, transcend it. In *Tristan und Isolde* (1859) the two protagonists are in love with negation, the spirit of death and denial; the world that does not allow them to love each other must be rejected outright. In *Parsifal* (1882), Wagner takes a further, deeper step: The pain of the world and its longings can be transcended through the hero's innocent compassion (*Mitleid*) for all creatures.

These ideas—love as negation, then love as compassion—find their "objective correlative" in some of the best music ever written. Magee's book is argumentative and captivating from first to last, and avoids the kind of technical language that makes so much music writing accessible only to specialists.

■ One of the least accurate—but, regrettably, most common—generalizations in U.S. politics is that conservative Republicans are isolationists. The next time you hear a lefty accuse conservatives of indifference to the world beyond our shores, fling at him a copy of Jesse Helms's new book, *Empire for Liberty: A Sovereign America and Her Moral Mission* (Regnery, 212 pp., $27.95). This valuable work anthologizes the redoubtable North Carolina senator's speeches and writings on foreign policy, and it leaves no doubt that Helms—the paradigmatic conservative—believes passionately in America's global role.

Helms proves that one can be a sincere globalist without being a woolly-minded advocate of every chimera that emerges from the stuffy conference rooms of the United Nations. Here's Helms on global engagement: "It is a fanciful notion that free peoples need to seek the approval of an international body (many of whose members are totalitarian dictatorships) to lend support to nations struggling to break the chains of tyranny and claim their inalienable, God-given rights. The United Nations has no power to grant or decline legitimacy to such actions. They are inherently legitimate."

Thomas Jefferson must be smiling. And for the rest of us, Helms's sentiment is even more delicious because of the venue in which he delivered it: the U.N. Security Council.

■ And now, some pure fun. *The New Thought Police: Inside the Left's Assault on Free Speech and Free Minds* (Prima, 300 pp., $23.95), by Tammy Bruce, is a passionate and entertaining diatribe. Bruce, an "openly gay, pro-choice, gun-owning, pro-death penalty, liberal, voted-for-Reagan feminist," is fed up with the pretensions of liberals who claim to be defenders of free speech while routinely demonizing anyone with politically incorrect views. For six years, Bruce was president of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Organization for Women, which means she was a witness to some of the worst excesses of today's thought police; she, like Ishmael, has survived to tell the tale. **NR**

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Evidence Against Iraq?

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 9

ROBERT NOVAK, much admired in this quarter, reported on his *Crossfire* program that conservatives were deeply divided on the matter of whether the United States should strike out against Saddam Hussein. On this matter he is adamant, insisting that there is no justification for doing this unless we have in hand concrete evidence that Saddam Hussein was involved in the September 11 massacre.

There are two points to make here: 1) Is there in fact such evidence against Iraq? 2) Do we need to wait for such evidence, if it is there, before proceeding against Iraq?

Laurie Mylroie's book, *Study of Revenge: Saddam Hussein's Unfinished War Against America*, reports persuasively that Saddam Hussein was the sponsor of the 1993 attempt on the World Trade Center. That was a huge effort, unsuccessful by the standards of September 11, but although the building did not collapse, six people were killed, and a 100-foot-wide crater opened up. One Ramzi Yousef was given two life sentences and is serving them out in Colorado. He said that his ambition had been to kill 250,000 people. Mylroie documents a huge effort to disguise his identity, alleging that he is in fact an Iraqi intelligence agent and that the work he did could not have been done by a deracinated band of terrorists. To be sure, we have been taught that far more sophisticated acts than the 1993 attempt can be consummated without apparent state backing. We have satisfied ourselves and our allies that Osama bin Laden is the dominant figure of September 11. We have not established that the Taliban government sponsored the terrorist act, but we are proceeding on the assumption that bin Laden could not have masterminded the slaughter without the backing of the government.

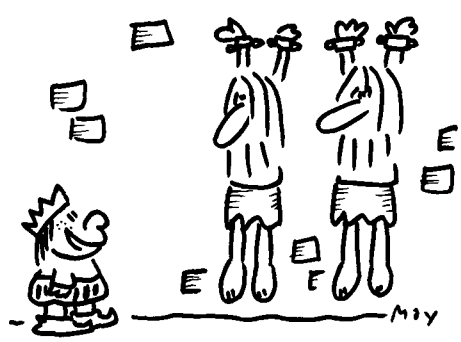
We are dealing with tyrannical states. It's true that the Taliban government can't make enough cornflakes for the Afghan people, but it does manage to control 90 percent of Afghanistan. It is beyond reasonable doubt that bin Laden proceeded with the tacit backing of the government, never mind its disavowal of September 11.

Saddam Hussein has also disavowed the act. So? Osama bin Laden *also* disavowed it, while congratulating the enterprise of its perpetrators. The density of the intrigue discourages conclusions that claim to be self-evident. We proceed against Afghanistan without such evidence as could survive, say, a trial with Johnnie Cochran upholding the innocence of bin Laden.

The position of some of the conservatives Mr. Novak warns against is that we have a de facto case against Saddam Hussein. The evidence at hand is not what we would need in a court of law. We would not, in 1942, have been able to prove that Adolf Hitler was exterminating the Jews. We proceed on reasonable grounds. Saddam Hussein shelters terrorists. Abdul Rahman Yasin, a central figure in the 1993 bombing, an indicted fugitive, is sheltered in Iraq. Saddam Hussein has essayed, at the expense of the Kurds, genocide. He catalyzed a great military enterprise by invading Kuwait. He has slaughtered dissidents and cultivates the final weapons of war.

We do not propose military exercises aimed at correcting abuses in derelict governments. The primary distinction, in the matter of Iraq, is that it is aligned with a force—a brotherhood—that under the banner of Islam, makes war against us. It can choose its targets with total concern for its own interests. But it ought not to be permitted to do so under the shelter of anonymity.

The White House's Ari Fleischer contradicted a report in Amman last week to the effect that President Bush had promised Jordan's King Abdullah that the United States would not move against Iraq. That doesn't mean that Mr. Bush intends to move against Iraq.



"I'm your new king, fellows, but don't worry—I'll never let you down."

At this moment, eyes train exclusively on Afghanistan. But it was Mr. Bush who said on September 12 that our enemy is not only the activators of the slaughter, but also those who give them shelter. It's true that many voices of Islam protest any contemplated action against Iraq and that diplomatic caution correctly informs us on what course to take.

But we do not need conclusive evidence of Iraq's participation in anti–U.S. terrorism to issue an ultimatum: Open your borders to an uninhibited inspection of Iraqi recesses of terrorist and aggressive activity. And deliver Abdul Rahman Yasin, handcuffed, to our embassy in Kuwait.

Get That Internet Tax Right

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 19

CONGRESS is up against it: What to do about Internet commerce?

To return to an example given earlier in this space, you have a mother living in Hartford, Conn., looking for a new mattress and spotting one on the website of a producer in Massachusetts. The feel of it is right, and so is the price, so the $500 order is placed. The mattress crossing the border is not taxed because, writing the Constitution in Philadelphia in 1787, it was decided: no tariffs within the 13 states. Interstate commerce would be regulated only by Congress.

Which is all to the good, but Connecticut takes the position that the family living happily in Hartford has to pay its share of the cost of government, which entitles the treasury to a use tax. If the mother in Hartford who sent for the mattress in Massachusetts were a perfect citizen, she would write a check for $30 (6 percent) to the State of Connecticut and sleep at complete ease with her conscience. What she does do, is sleep at complete ease with her conscience *without* sending in the check for $30. The reason for it is that taxes of that order are pretty well uncollectible. An uncollectible tax is one which would cost more to exact than it would yield in profit. There is, in addition, the political question. People wouldn't like it when Big Brother stared into every out-of-

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state package, inquiring whether there is something in it for city hall.

So that one part of the pressure building on Congress is collectivist: to let states come in with a transfer tax. But a second pressure is from merchants who see themselves affected by untaxed transactions. The mattress maker in Connecticut is willing to compete with the company in Massachusetts, but does not like it if out-of-state businesses are, in practical terms, subsidized; that's what the non-tax amounts to. Local concerns are complaining about traffic in mattresses and books and records and computer equipment which, ordered through the Internet, come in, so to speak, duty free.

Three years ago, Congress voted to continue until 2001 the tax-free character of interstate commerce. The Internet is the happiest intellectual, journalistic, and educational development in history, and the thought of letting the weeds of prehensile government crawl about it struck some as on the order of enforced shutters on sunlight or taps on waterfalls.

The estimated commerce done by the Internet in 1998 was $9 billion. Last year it was $26 billion. Which means we have to come to earth, and face homespun economic truths. If the advantage of tax-free Internet commerce marginally closes out local industry, reforms are required.

The mechanics of reforms call on holding not the buyer, but the seller, responsible. It still won't be possible to target the mother in Hartford directly when the mattress arrives, but the exporter of it in Massachusetts can be required to add $30 to the cost of the mattress, and send the check off to Connecticut Internal Revenue. It is, finally, impossible for Congress to wrestle with the problem without yielding to legitimate demands of the states spending the money on education, police, and fire departments, and deprive them of revenue.

The question has not come up in the current welter of proposals, but we have to watch carefully to prevent the United States Postal Service from getting into the act. The most calamitous exposure of the postal service since the days of mail-train robberies is of course fax and the Internet. These are, for all intents and purposes, absolutely free transactions. One hundred messages can be sent out, or for that matter one thousand, for less than the cost of a first-class postage stamp. A rumor swept about the medium, a year or so back, that a proposal was making way that would charge five cents for every communication sent out on the Internet.

The very idea is heretical, like charging for Communion wafers. To tax the Internet for the benefit of the postal service is unsupportable reasoning. The postal service needs to survive from its own revenues. If there is a shortfall, the government can come up with it, as required, on the same principle as rural free delivery. But to attempt to relieve its problems by contaminating the Internet is something that any congressman who has taken an oath to right reason is bound to oppose.

The Missing Declaration

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 26

THE world community is prepared to believe that terrorist activity is not an expression of the Islamic faith. We say this because credible Koranic experts tell us so and because the sense of religion is elementary respect for human life. The United Nations, in September, passed two resolutions, one in the Security Council, one in the General Assembly. The Security Council voted unanimously its condemnation of the terrorism. The Assembly didn't take the vote of its members individually, but the resolution was passed by a standing vote. Azerbaijan's representative called movingly for blood donations by U.N. representatives—"we do love this city, we love New York, and we want to help it."

Adrian Karatnycky, the president of Freedom House, reminds us soberingly in NATIONAL REVIEW that it is misleading to think of the terrorists as pure emanations of a foreign culture. We are reminded of the leading terrorists of the century and their ties to the West. Lenin of Zurich, Pol Pot and Ho Chi Minh of Paris. Che Guevara the cosmopolitan doctor. The ringleader of the contemplated bombing of a 400-room hotel in Jordan was an American-born Muslim, Raed Hijazi. He studied business administration at Cal State and, according to Jordanian prosecutors, got his taste of radical Islamic teaching at a mosque near his Sacramento campus. His mullah there put him progressively in touch with Osama bin Laden. Mohamed Atta, who led the terrorists on September 11, lived an urbane life brought up by a middle-class family; he had years of experience living in Germany and in the United States. That doesn't vitiate the faith by which the terrorists died, which was hardly Western. *Kill them, as God said; No Prophet can have prisoners of war.* That was a sentence in the text the terrorists were guided by, found in the abandoned car in which one of them drove to the airport, to seal his fate and that of five thousand New Yorkers. "Be steadfast and remember [that in] God you will be triumphant," his catechism went on.

Ms. Aasma Khan of New York is co-creator of Muslims Against Terrorism. According to Robin Finn of the *New York Times*, the "month-old coalition of urban professionals [is] dedicated to educating fellow New Yorkers—and beyond—that Islam neither endorses nor tutors terrorists." She is an "angrily articulate advocate intent on disproving any link between Islam and the fugitive who dominates her nightmares, Osama bin Laden."

Now all of this is reassuring. But we have every day, in the press and on television, accounts of public acclaim in the Islamic world for the deeds of September 11. Quoted before in this space was the 32-year-old body-and-fender man in Karachi, who explained to the reporter that holy wars come about only when Allah has no other way to maintain justice, times like now. "That is why Allah took out his sword" on September 11.

However persuaded we are of the profanity of September 11, declarations to that effect need to come, to be sure from theological exegetes, but most pointedly from political leaders. The United States, in company with Christian leaders of the West, should ask for specific affirmations from presidents and prime ministers and caliphs of the more than 50 Moslem countries. It would not be untoward to ask that, in the tradition of international signatories in recent history, they affix their names to a declaration. It would read:

"We, political leaders of the community of Islamic nations, reject such terrorism as was practiced on September 11, 2001. The men who took this action in the name of Allah were impostors who profaned the word of the prophet."

Not more would need to be said, but that Declaration of Islamic Doctrine on Modern Terrorism, with names and titles of world leaders, should appear everywhere, in parliaments, mosques, subway stations. And airports.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

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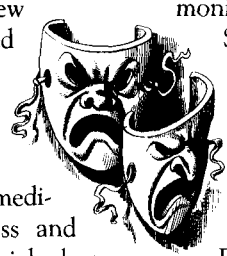
■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

WE have an emergency. I compiled a sheaf of notes and file-named them Terror3.NR, but faced with the prospect of turning them into a column, I suddenly found that I couldn't go on. Writing three columns in a row about Sept. 11 is like listening to the Three Tenors. It's two tenors too many, or as George Eliot put it: "much of a muchness."

So, you're going to have to take potluck because I invented a new approach to the essay: I decided to open the newspaper at random and write about the first thing I saw that wasn't about terrorism.



I admit I cheated a little, immediately discarding the Business and Sports sections, but when I picked up Style I squeezed my eyes shut, stuck my finger indiscriminately into the pages, and yanked them apart. When I opened my eyes, the first thing I saw were two movie reviews.

Riding in Cars with Boys stars Drew Barrymore, the acting profession's collateral damage, and is based on Beverly Donofrio's coming-of-age memoir of the same name. It just so happens that I reviewed the book, but if you think that's going to get this show on the road, guess again. I've reviewed countless other books just like it, and I never could tell one from the other. Comprising the Funky Feminism school of growth-through-humping, their standard theme is How the '60s Liberated My Personhood, and their titles all sound alike (e.g., Rosemary Daniell's *Sleeping with Soldiers*). I pretty much panned the whole genre, which is why editors kept assigning them to me. I would get a phone call and the editor would say, "Here's one you can have some fun with," which is lit-crit code for "I know you're going to hate it."

The movie reviewer said that *Riding in Cars with Boys* lacks "the honesty and grit" of the book, but I don't remember any honesty and grit. In fact, I don't remember anything about it at all except that I panned it. I read the movie review with great care but nothing in it rang a bell; my mind is a total blank, so chalk up one shaggy-dog story for my new approach to the essay.

The other movie review was *From Hell*, about Jack the Ripper. Now we're cooking. . . . I could fill a whole issue with commentary on this subject.

It's doubtful if the crimes would have become so legendary without the catchy moniker. Nicknaming is an Anglo-Saxon art form born of our need to erect jaunty barriers against emotion, a case in point being the number of WASP men who call their wives "Dutch." The Ripper's nickname invariably gets lost in translation. When the French dramatized the story they called him "Jacques L' Eventreur," which simply doesn't do it. It sounds very fey and very French, a murderer out of a puppet show. I don't know what the Germans call him, but I can imagine. They probably throw together one of their verb-trailing compounds that translates as "Jack who the throats of women who their bodies to men sell cuts." If, as is generally thought, the murderer invented the name himself in his taunting letters to the police, we can clear the two Polish suspects because whoever coined "Jack the Ripper" had an English ear.

The best Ripper book, in my opinion, is Tom Cullen's *When London Walked in Terror*. The worst is Frank Spering's *Prince Jack*, which kicked off the fad of attributing the crimes to Prince Albert Victor, grandson of Queen Victoria and the heir presumptive to the throne until his death from typhoid in 1892.

Prince "Eddy," as he was called (his father was Edward, Prince of Wales, later Edward VII), has to be the sorriest candidate for alpha-male mayhem in criminal history. A study in limpid-eyed lethargy, he was, said Victoria's cousin, the Duke of Cambridge, "never ready, never there." Whatever else we may say of Jack the Ripper, he was smart, but Eddy's mind, said his tutor, was "at all times in an abnormally dormant condition."

To claim a retarded drunkard and drug addict who had inherited his mother's congenital deafness could have pulled off the Ripper's split-second timing and daring escapes is silly enough, but the Prince Jack contingent also insists that the Ripper's surgical skills, good enough to be attributed to a doctor or a Jewish ritual slaughterer, could easily have been acquired by Eddy at royal shooting parties.

It's true that he was always shooting something. In fact, the royal calendar for the August murder dates puts him in Scotland for the sacred annual pursuit of the grouse. He and the other bluebloods shot thousands of birds and animals on any given day, but they did not dress their own kill. That task was beneath even the "ghillies," or gamekeepers; it was done by lowly rustics at a far remove from the royal picnic tables. Eddy would never even have seen it, much less taken a hand in it.

The words "a good English murder" are synonymous with escapism, but we haven't escaped the Ripper. His trademark is the coin of our cultural realm. In the words of Tom Cullen:

> The head had been so nearly severed from the body that the killer had knotted a handkerchief around the neck as though to hold the head to the torso. The left arm had been placed across the left breast, and the legs were drawn up, with the feet resting on the ground and the knees turned outward. The face was bruised and the tongue was swollen and protruded between the front teeth. The body had been disemboweled and, with some show of surgical deftness, the uterus and its appendages had been removed. As a further bizarre note, two brass rings, evidently wrenched from the middle finger of her left hand, and a few pennies and farthings, were laid out neatly at the victim's feet.

Playboy and *Penthouse* arrange a woman the same way: nude except for a scarf or gold chain, gynecologically exposed, fondling her own breast, tongue protruding enticingly, the body airbrushed to remove blemishes, and books on playing the stock market scattered at the bottom of the bed. **NR**

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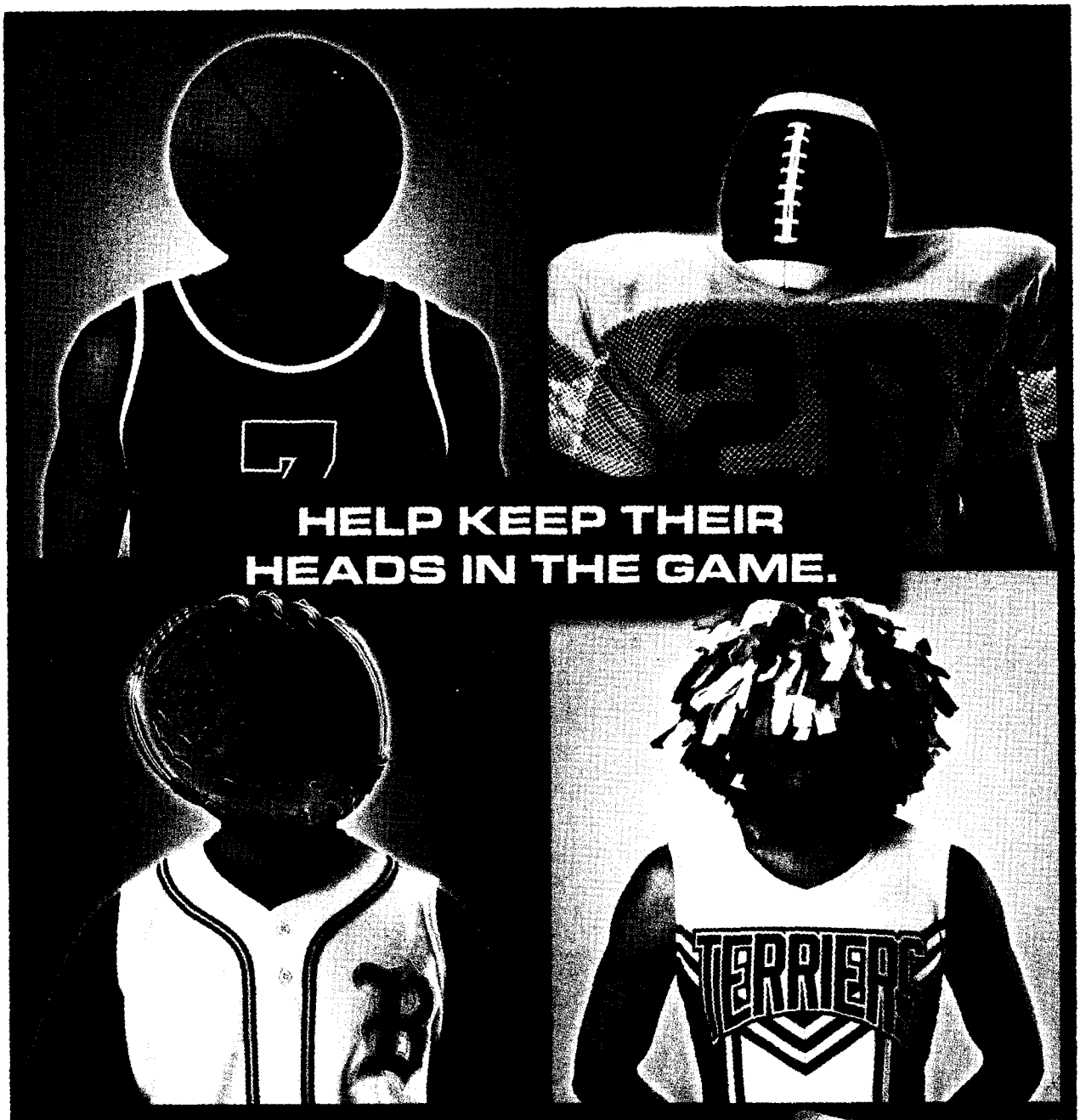

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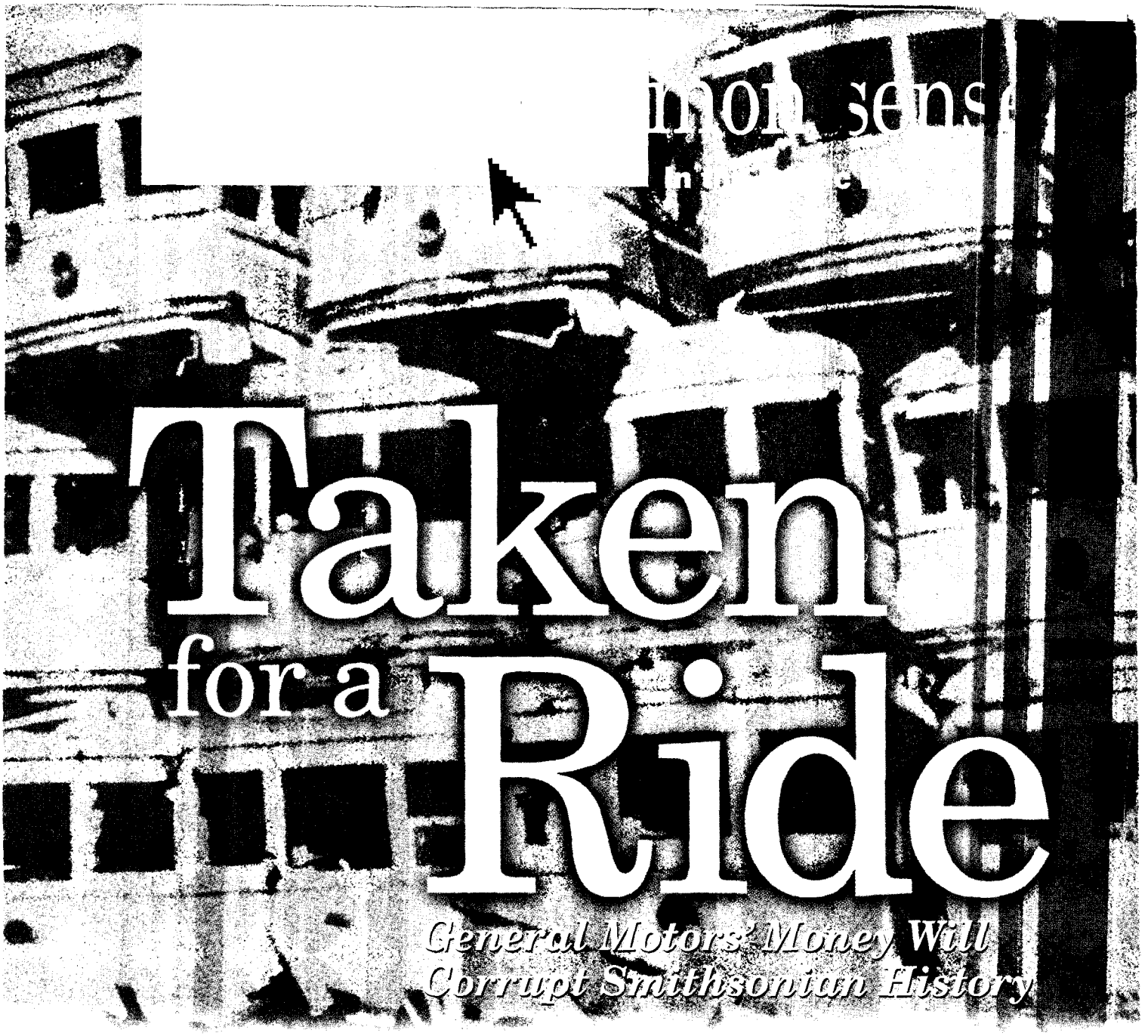

Taken for a Ride

General Motors' Money Will Corrupt Smithsonian History

The Smithsonian Institution wants its new transportation exhibit to "tell stories of how transportation changed America."

Here's a story: In 1949, General Motors and other corporations were convicted of conspiracy. Their crime relied on using a front company to purchase and dismantle over 100 public transit systems in 45 cities, replacing electric trolleys with GM buses.

The conspirators deliberately destroyed clean, efficient and popular public transit so Americans would have to rely on automobiles. The results: big profit for GM; gridlock, sprawl and pollution for everyone else.

GM took us for a ride.

GM's crime is an historical fact that shapes American lives to this day. How could any transportation history not take it into account?

But now that GM has pledged $10 million to help the Smithsonian update its transportation exhibit – to be renamed the "GM Hall of Transportation" – don't look to the nation's curator for an account of this history.

The Smithsonian's Board of Regents – Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Vice President Dick Cheney among them – have not yet decided whether to accept GM's offer.

They should decline, despite assurances that the company will have no say in the exhibit's make up.

The museum's credibility is already suffering, internally and in public, from recent controversies over other major gifts encouraged by Smithsonian Secretary Lawrence Small.

"Secretary Small has obligated the Museum to relationships with private individuals that breach established standards of museum practice and professional ethics," members of the museum's Congress of Scholars wrote in May in an open letter. "Of all the acquisitions made by the Smithsonian in over 150 years, the most significant by far is the trust of the American people."

A "GM Hall of Transportation" would be a violation of that trust.

This Week at TomPaine.com – Taken For A Ride. *Featuring "The Streetcar Conspiracy"... The Scholars' Open Letter... "History and Politics of Pollution."... and The Small Controversy from* ***CommercialAlert.org****.*

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